

My Free Catechism

Book One: The Apostles' Creed

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Given this 16th day of September, 2020 at the Chancery of the Diocese of Allentown.



Alfred A. Schlert

Most Reverend Alfred A. Schlert
Bishop of Allentown

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This catechism is intended as a supplementary learning material for children in the upper grades, but is substantial enough to be usable also by young adults and the general public. It also aims to serve as a free resource for many average Catholics who need to learn or review what the Catholic faith teaches, but who have no time nor endurance to read the voluminous and theologically precise *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

This catechism is divided into four books; namely, Book One: *The Apostle's Creed*, Book Two: *The Sacraments*, Book Three: *The Commandments*, and Book Four: *Prayer and Christian Perfection*. The books are available in the form of pdf files that may be copied, shared, printed on paper or uploaded to children's mobile devices, iPods or computer tablets.

I did not write this catechism from scratch. To save time I made use of the questions and answers from old catechisms in the public domain, particularly the *Catechism of St. Pius X*. However, I edited, expanded and updated many of the texts to reflect current Church teachings. Color texts and illustrations, which are missing in old catechisms, were added to make the book attractive to young readers.

Many of the pictures used here are also in the public domain here in the U.S., but there are a few copyrighted ones that I took the liberty of using based on the concept of "fair use," as defined by Title 17, U.S. Code §107, for educational and non-commercial purposes. Picture credits and a link to their sources and license (when available) are given at the end of the book.

External references in the texts, such as references to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) or to the *1983 Code of Canon Law* (CIC), are added mainly for the use of parents or teachers who are coaching the children in learning this catechism. However, it is hoped that through the reading of select paragraphs of the CCC, many will be encouraged to read the entire book and profit from its wealth of wisdom.

Biblical texts used in this catechism are mostly from the *Douay-Challoner Rheims* version which, because they are in the public domain, I have edited slightly just to make the English less archaic for contemporary readers. The final texts may be compared with the original text of the *Douay-Challoner-Rheims* version (link below).

Although I made this book as a lay Dominican, this book is my personal project and not the project of the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic. Therefore, the ideas expressed are mine alone and do not represent the endorsement or position of the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic or the Order of Preachers as a whole.

USEFUL LINKS

Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC):

<http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/INDEX.HTM>

1983 Code of Canon Law (CIC – comes from the Latin title *Codex Iuris Canonici*)

http://www.vatican.va/archive/cod-iuris-canonici/cic_index_en.html

Anecdotes and Examples Illustrating the Catholic Catechism

<https://archive.org/details/AnecdotesAndExamplesIllustrating/page/n5/mode/2up>

Douay-Challoner-Rheims Bible (public domain)

<http://www.drbo.org/index.htm>



Fig 1 Madonna and Child

Artist: Giovanni Battista Salvi da Sassoferrato (1609-1685)

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Article 3: *“Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary.”*

Article 4: *“Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.”*

Article 5: *“He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead.”*

Article 6: *“He ascended into Heaven, is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.”*

Article 7: *“From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.”*

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PART 1 *THE APOSTLES' CREED*

HOLY SCRIPTURE

1. Where are the truths which God has revealed contained?

The truths which God has revealed are contained in Holy Scripture and in Sacred Tradition.

2. What is Holy Scripture?

Holy Scripture is the collection of books containing God's revelation, which have been written *under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit*, by the prophets, the evangelists, the Apostles and other sacred writers. (CCC 105)

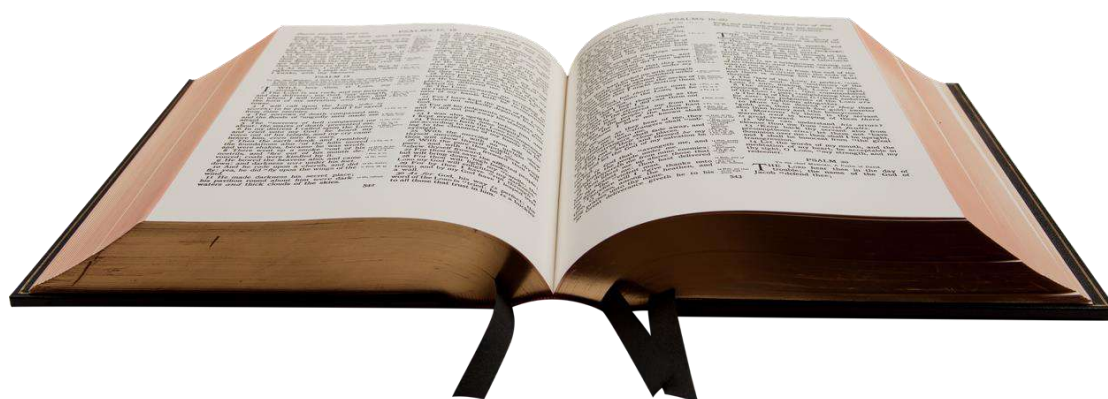


Fig 1.0.1 The Holy Scripture

3. How is Holy Scripture divided?

Holy Scripture is divided into two parts, the Old and the New Testament.

4. What is the Old Testament?

The Old Testament comprises the inspired books written before the coming of Jesus Christ.

5. What is the New Testament?

The New Testament comprises the inspired books written after the coming of Jesus Christ. The books of the New Testament that deal especially with the life of Christ are called the “Gospels.”

6. What is the common name for Holy Scripture?

The common name for Holy Scripture is the Holy Bible.

7. What is the meaning of the word “Bible”?

The word “Bible” means “The Book.” Actually the Bible is a collection of books bound together in a single volume. It is the book “par excellence,” the book of books.

8. Why is the Bible or Holy Scripture called the book "par excellence"?

Holy Scripture is so called because of the surpassing merit of its content and of the Author (the Holy Spirit) who inspired it.

9. Since the Bible is “inspired,” are the books of the Bible inspiring to read?

No. That the Bible is “inspired” means that it was written under the guidance of, and protected from error by, the Holy Spirit. It does not mean that its contents are inspiring, although some are.

10. Can there be any error in Holy Scripture?

There cannot be any error in Holy Scripture since indeed it is inspired by God. (CCC 107) The Author of the sacred books is God Himself. This does not prevent that in copies and translations that have been made, some errors on the part of the copyists or translators may have crept into it.

11. Is the reading of the Bible necessary to all Christians?

The reading of the Bible is not absolutely necessary to all Christians since they are also instructed by the Church. However, its reading is very useful and recommended to all. (CCC 133)

12. How many books are in the Bible?

There are 46 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament, for a total of 73 books. (CCC 120)

OLD TESTAMENT

Book	Abbrev.	Book	Abbrev.
Genesis	Gen	Song of Songs (Canticles)	Sg
Exodus	Ex	Wisdom	Wisd
Leviticus	Lev	Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)	Sir
Numbers	Num	Isaiah	Isa
Deuteronomy	Deut	Jeremiah	Jer
Josue	Jos	Lamentations	Lam
Judges	Jgs	Baruch	Bar
Ruth	Ruth	Ezekiel	Ez
1 Samuel (1 Kings)	1 Sam	Daniel	Dan
2 Samuel (2 Kings)	2 Sam	Hosea (Osee)	Hos
1 Kings (3 Kings)	1 Kgs	Joel	Joel
2 Kings (4 Kings)	2 Kgs	Amos	Am
1 Chronicles (1 Para.)	1 Chr	Obadiah (Abdias)	Ob
2 Chronicles (2 Para.)	2 Chr	Jonah	Jon
Ezra (1 Esdras)	Ezr	Micah (Micheas)	Mi
Nehemiah (2 Esdras)	Neh	Nahum	Nah
Tobit (Tobias)	Tob	Habacuc	Hab
Judith	Jdt	Zephaniah (Sophonias)	Zep
Esther	Esth	Haggai (Aggeus)	Hg
Job	Job	Zecariah	Zec
Psalms	Ps	Malachi	Mal
Proverbs	Prov	1 Maccabees	1 Macc
Qoheleth (Ecclesiastes)	Qo	2 Maccabees	2 Macc

Some old Bibles combine Jeremiah and Lamentations into one book, thus ending with a total of only 45 books in the Old Testament.

The names given in the table are those used in most modern versions of the Bible. The names in parentheses are the names used in the old *Douay-Challoner-Rheims* version.

The books highlighted in yellow are missing in Protestant Bibles. The book of Daniel is not missing, but Daniel 3:24-90, as well as Chapters 13 and 14, are missing. Thus, the Protestant Old Testament is not complete.

NEW TESTAMENT

Book	Abbrev.	Book	Abbrev.
Matthew	Matt	1 Timothy	1 Tim
Mark	Mark	2 Timothy	2 Tim
Luke	Luke	Titus	Tit
John	John	Philemon	Phlm
The Acts of the Apostles	Acts	Hebrews	Heb
Paul to the Romans	Rom	James	Jas
1 Corinthians	1 Cor	1 Peter	1 Pet
2 Corinthians	2 Cor	2 Peter	2 Pet
Galatians	Gal	1 John	1 John
Ephesians	Eph	2 John	2 John
Philippians	Phil	3 John	3 John
Colossians	Col	Jude	Jude
1 Thessalonians	1 Thes	Revelation	Rev
2 Thessalonians	2 Thes		

13. How are passages in the Bible referenced?

All books of the Bible are divided into chapters, and every sentence, called a *verse*, is numbered. When a passage or text is quoted from the Bible, the author will usually give the name of the book, the chapter, and the verse number. Frequently, only the abbreviation, rather than the full name of the book, is given. The verse is separated from the chapter by a colon (:). For example, consider the following:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land” (Matt 5:3-4).

The symbol at the end of the quotation, Matt 5:3-4, indicates that the text was taken from the Gospel of St. Matthew, Chapter 5, verses 3 thru 4.

14. Through which means can we know the true meaning of the Holy Scripture?

We can only know the true meaning of Holy Scripture through the Church (CCC 85), because she alone is secure against error in her interpretation. Christ promised her the protection of the Holy Spirit in the words, “The Paraclete, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things...” (John 14:26).

15. May any translation of the Bible in the vernacular be read?

We should read only those translations of the Bible in the vernacular which have been acknowledged as faithful translations by the Catholic Church, and which have explanations also approved by the Church.

16. Why does the Church not recommend Protestant Bibles?

The Church does not recommend Protestant Bibles because they are not complete, and they lack the explanatory annotations and footnotes that explain the Catholic understanding of many obscure passages in Holy Scripture.

SACRED TRADITION

17. What is meant by Sacred Tradition?

Sacred Tradition is God's revelation that originated from Jesus Christ and the Apostles, but which has not been committed into writing *by way of divine inspiration*, and which, through the centuries, has come down to us without alteration by word of mouth through the constant teaching and practice of the Church.

18. If Sacred Tradition refers to divinely revealed truths that have not been committed into writing, then how do we discover them?

It is not that Sacred Tradition refers to divine revelation that was never committed into writing, but to revealed truths that were not committed into writing *by way of divine inspiration*. Actually, many of the truths of Sacred Tradition, and what the early Church believed, are also recorded and preserved in the Church's conciliar decrees, the writings of the Fathers of the Church, the Acts of the martyrs, and even in the prayers and liturgy of the early Church. But none of these writings were made under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. They are valuable because they preserve what the Church received from Christ and the Apostles, but they are not "inspired" writings.

19. How do we know which writings are inspired by the Holy Spirit?

We only know which writings are "inspired" through the Church. The Catholic Church is divinely instituted to lead all men to salvation. Therefore, she alone can infallibly make a determination about which books should be regarded as "inspired" and which are not. In the *Council of Trent*, A.D. 1546, the Church officially defined the list of inspired books that comprise the whole Bible. That list of books, which is reproduced in the table above, is called the *canon* of Holy Scripture. (CCC 120)

20. Is Sacred Tradition infallible?

Yes, Sacred Tradition is infallible because it contains the revealed word of God. But one must be careful not to equate Sacred Tradition with the various *records* or *monuments* of Sacred Tradition, such as the writings of the Fathers of the Church, and others. Sacred Tradition itself is infallible, but the human records of Sacred Tradition made by the Fathers and other early Christians are not.

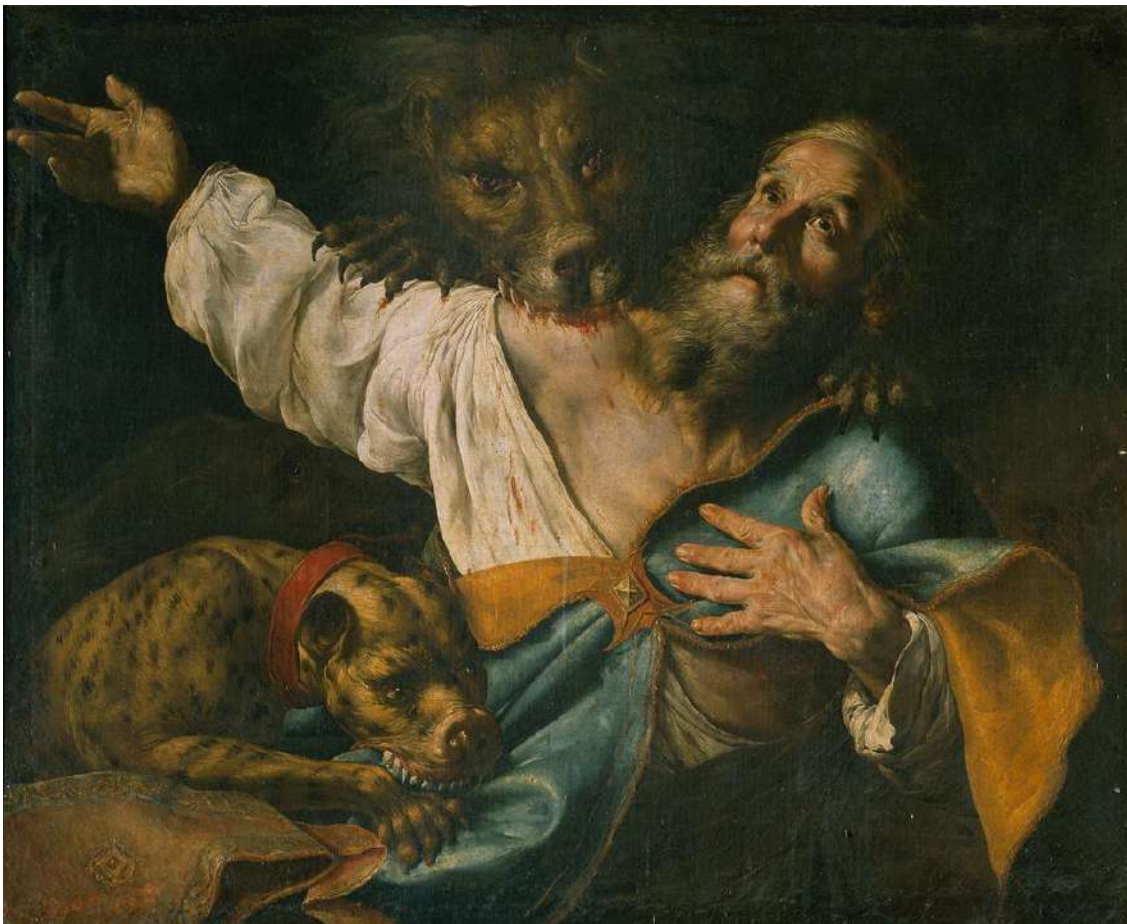


Fig 1.0.2 St. Ignatius of Antioch

One of the Fathers of the Church, St. Ignatius (A.D. 35-117) lived during the time of the Apostles and became the third bishop of Antioch (in Syria). In his writings he declared the reality of Christ as true God and true man, and affirmed his belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. During the cruel Roman persecutions his body was devoured by the lions at the Roman Amphitheatre because he chose to die rather than renounce his faith.

21. If the writings of the Fathers and other records of Sacred Tradition are neither inspired nor infallible, then what good are they?

Although these writings are neither inspired nor infallible, they are valuable because from them we also learn what the early Church received from the Apostles. For example, when there is a morally unanimous agreement among the Fathers of the Church on the status of a proposition as divinely revealed, then we can be sure that the truth of the proposition was part of Sacred Tradition (criterion of unanimity). And it is not necessary that all Fathers express their agreement either. If some of the Fathers at different times and in different places express their agreement *without opposition from the others*, then there exists a morally unanimous agreement. Let us not forget that we also have a divinely appointed Teaching Authority, the Church, who determines which statements from the Fathers are divinely revealed and, therefore, authentically part of Sacred Tradition.



Fig 1.0.3 Madonna and Child in a Catacomb Art

The records of Sacred Tradition are not limited to the writings of the Fathers of the Church. For example, one of the earliest monuments to the ancient Catholic veneration of Mary may be found in the Catacomb of Priscilla in Rome. The image above, estimated to be about 1500 years old, shows the Virgin Mary nursing the Child Jesus.

22. What importance must we attach to Sacred Tradition?

We must attach to Sacred Tradition the same importance as we attach to the Holy Scripture because both are infallible sources of Divine revelation (CCC 82). We ought to be thankful that, in addition to Holy Scripture, we also have Sacred Tradition. For, there are many revealed truths that are not fully recorded in Holy Scripture, and we learn them mainly from Sacred Tradition.

23. What are some examples of divinely revealed truths that are not fully stated in Holy Scripture, but which we learn from Sacred Tradition?

Some examples of divinely revealed truths from Sacred Tradition are the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, the dogma of the Assumption of Mary, the privilege of her Immaculate Conception, the infallibility of the popes, the doctrine of Apostolic Succession, and even the canon of Holy Scripture itself. For it is only from Sacred Tradition that we come to know which of the many competing books that had been written are inspired, and which are not. Also, it is from Sacred Tradition that we learn many of our Catholic practices, such as the practice of Infant Baptism, of observing the Sabbath on Sunday, of offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, of confessing our sins to a priest, of praying for the dead, etc. Many of these beliefs and practices are only briefly hinted at in Holy Scripture, but it is on account of Sacred Tradition that we practiced them through the ages and continue to practice them to this day.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

24. What is the Apostles' Creed?

It is a summary of the truths of faith handed down to us by the Apostles. The Apostles' Creed is the one that will be discussed in this catechism. A similar creed, known as the *Nicene Creed*, is the one we recite at Mass. (CCC 194-196)

25. What are the Apostles?

They were friends of our Lord Jesus Christ whom He trained to teach us our Faith. There were twelve of them (Matt 10:1-4; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16). Their names are:

1. St. Simon Peter
2. St. Andrew
3. St. James the Greater, son of Zebedee
4. St. John the Evangelist, son of Zebedee
5. St. Philip
6. St. Bartholomew
7. St. Thomas the doubter
8. St. Matthew the tax collector
9. St. James the Less, son of Alphaeus
10. St. Jude Thaddeus, son of Alphaeus
11. St. Simon the Cananaean
12. Judas Iscariot the traitor, who was replaced by St. Matthias (Acts 1:21-26)

St. Peter and St. Andrew were brothers.

St. James the Less and St. Jude Thaddeus were brothers, too, and were first cousins of our Lord Jesus Christ.

26. How many articles of faith are there in the Apostles' Creed?

There are twelve articles of faith in the Creed. There is an ancient belief that the Creed was composed by the Apostles themselves, which is why it is called "The Apostles' Creed."



Fig 1.0.4 Statues of the Twelve Apostles
The statues are made by *Demetz Art Studio*

The Apostles from left to right:

- First Row – St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Matthew, St. Jude Thaddeus
- Second Row – St. Andrew, St. Bartholomew, St. John the Evangelist, St. Simon Zelotes
- Third Row – St. James the Less, St. James the Greater, St. Philip, St. Thomas the Doubter

Note: St. Paul was not one of the original Twelve Apostles. He is shown in this picture because he played a major role in the growth of the early Church, and is known as the “Apostle of the Gentiles.” Judas Iscariot, who was one of the original Twelve, is not shown because he betrayed our Lord. He was later replaced by St. Matthias (who is not shown in the picture either).

27. Recite the Apostles' Creed.

1. *I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven¹ and earth.*
2. *And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.*
3. *Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary.*
4. *Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.*
5. *He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead.*
6. *He ascended into Heaven, is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.*
7. *From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.*
8. *I believe in the Holy Spirit.*
9. *The Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints;*
10. *The forgiveness of sins;*
11. *The resurrection of the body; and*
12. *Life everlasting. Amen.*

¹ In this catechism I capitalize the word “Heaven” when referring to the place where God dwells, and where the angels and saints enjoy His presence in supreme bliss and happiness. I use the word “heaven” (in lower case) when referring to what is sometimes called the “heavens,” the place up in the sky where the stars and heavenly bodies exist, and which is really part of our material world. Thus, when I say that Christ ascended into Heaven, I do not mean that He went into outer space, but that He ascended to be with the Father and the Holy Spirit, in the joyful company of the angels and saints. This Heaven is really an invisible world of spirits, distinct from our material universe. I only call it a “place” for lack of a better term, but it is not a material place because spirits, unlike matter, do not occupy space. The invisible world of God and the angels is not in outer space. It is not in space at all.

ARTICLE 1: “I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth.”

1. What does the first article of the Creed teach us?

The first article of the Creed teaches us that there is one and only one God; that He is all-powerful, and that He created Heaven and earth and everything else, that is to say, the whole Universe.

2. How do we know that there is a God?

When you see footprints on the sand, don't you know that someone passed there? Well, the world is full of God's footprints in the marvelous things that He has made. Just look at how butterflies are formed, for example.

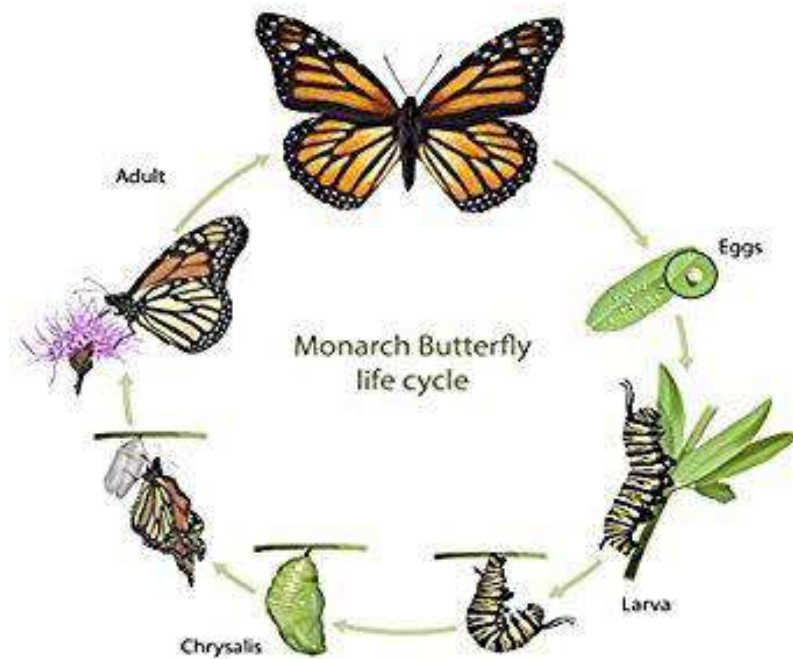


Fig 1.1.1 Metamorphosis of a Butterfly

They start out as eggs. Then they become caterpillars. After a few days they envelop themselves into a chrysalis (or cocoon) made from their own bodies. Then they come out with a head, thorax and abdomen, with a pair of sensitive antennae, compound eyes, six

jointed legs and beautifully decorated wings and ready to fly. When something amazing like this happens, do you think it all happens by chance? Or is there Someone Powerful and Intelligent behind these transformations? This is just one example among hundreds of other examples that we find in the world. Our heart tells us that there is Someone Powerful and Intelligent behind all these, although He is unseen by the human eye. That Unseen, Powerful and Intelligent Being is GOD! (CCC 31-35)

3. Why do we call God Father?

We call God Father because He created us, and because by nature He is the Father of God the Son, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, and by grace our Father, too, on account of which we are called adopted sons of God. (CCC 238-240)

4. What is the Blessed Trinity?

The Blessed Trinity is the truth that in one God there are three Divine Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

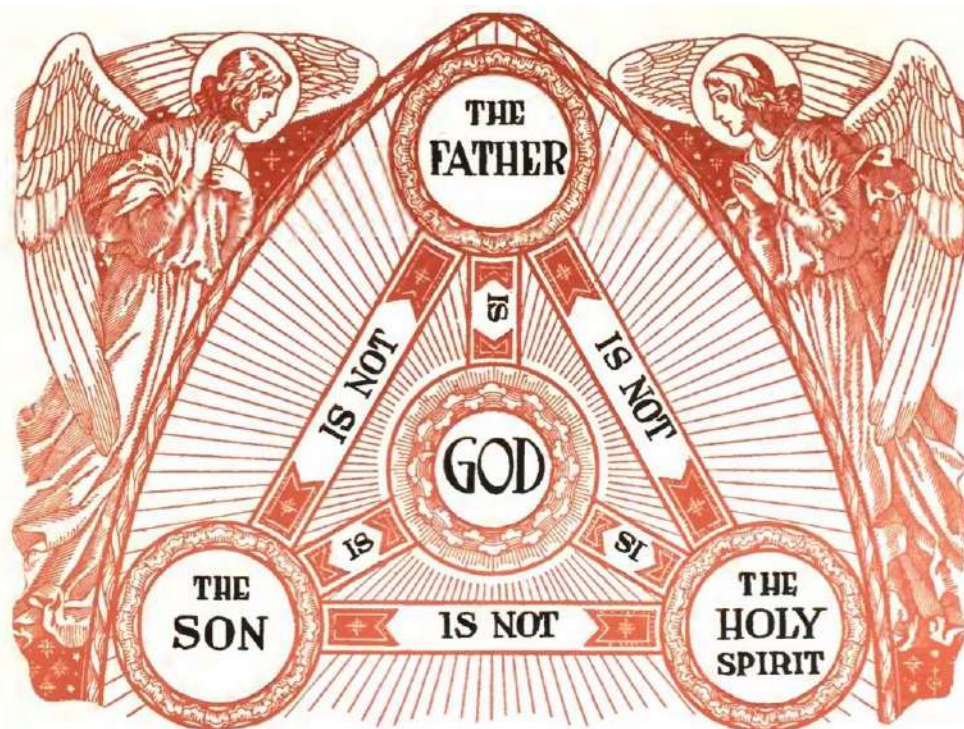


Fig 1.1.2 The Blessed Trinity

The Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son. Each one of the Divine Persons is God, yet there are not three but only ONE God. This is a profound truth of our Faith, which is why it is called a *mystery* – the **Mystery of the Blessed Trinity**. (CCC 253-256)

5. Why is the Father the First Person of the Blessed Trinity?

The Father is the First Person of the Blessed Trinity because He does not proceed from any other Person, but is the principle of the other two Persons, that is, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

6. In the Creed we say, “I believe in God the Father Almighty.” What does “Almighty” mean?

The word “almighty” means all-powerful. God can make all things because His power is *infinite*, that is, without limit. (CCC 268-269)

7. Does God have other perfections besides being all-powerful?

Yes, because He is most perfect and, like His power, all His perfections are infinite. God is:

ALL-KNOWING = He sees and knows everything without limit;

ALL-PRESENT = He is everywhere;

ETERNAL = He always was, always is, and always will be;

UNCHANGABLE = He cannot change; He is always what He is;

ALL-GOOD = He seeks the good and does not sin;

ALL-KIND = He cares for us;

ALL-MERCIFUL = He is always ready to forgive;

ALL JUST = He rewards the good and punishes the evil.

8. Why do we not see God?

We do not see God because He is a spirit and has no body. And because He has no body, God cannot decompose into various parts and will never die.

9. If God cannot sin nor die, why do we say He can do all things?

Though He can neither sin nor die, we say God can do all things because to be able to sin or to die is not an effect of power, but of weakness which cannot exist in God who is most perfect.

10. In the Creed we also say, “I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth.” What does it mean to create?

To create means to make something *out of nothing*. Artists and builders also make things, but they need materials to make them. But God can make things, even the materials that He needs, out of nothing. That is how He made heaven and earth and all things contained therein, that is, the whole Universe. He made them all out of nothing. (CCC 296, 325-327)

11. Was the world created by the Father alone?

The world was created by all the three Divine Persons, because whatever one Person does with regard to creatures is also done by the other two Persons in one and the selfsame act.

12. Why then is creation especially attributed to the Father?

Creation is especially attributed to the Father because creation is the work of Divine Power. Just as wisdom is attributed to the Son and goodness to the Holy Spirit, power is attributed to the Father, although all three Persons possess the same wisdom, goodness and power. (CCC 258)



Fig 1.1.3 God the Father and Creator of the World

Questions for discussion:

1. If God is a spirit, why did the artist depict God the Father with a head, arms and body?
2. What suggests that this is a painting of the Father and not of the Son or of the Holy Spirit?

13. Does God take any interest in the world He created? And does He care about us?

Of course He cares about the world and us. When you make something, then it belongs to you. And because it belongs to you, you care for it. God takes care of the world and us because He created us, and we belong to Him. He therefore preserves us, and governs us by His infinite goodness and wisdom. Nothing happens in the world that He does not either will or permit. (CCC 270)

14. If God cares about us, then why does He let bad things happen in the world?

God has His reasons. Note that there are two kinds of bad things that happen in the world: **physical evil** (such as sickness, death, earthquakes, etc.) and **moral evil** or **sin** (such as murder, war, etc.) God does NOT directly will either one of these evils. However:

- a) He *permits* sin because it is the price of human freedom. If men cannot sin, then how can they be free? Since God chose to have creatures endowed with freedom (free will), He permits, although He does not will, that they commit sin.
- b) Physical evils are different. God wills them *indirectly* on account of the good that results from them. For example, God wills persecution and suffering because without them we will not have heroes and martyrs. Without hardship, we will not learn self-control and diligence. Without poverty, we cannot practice benevolence and charity. So, God indirectly wills these physical evils on account of the good that derives from them.
- c) Many of those that we call physical evil are results of natural processes and are often useful in themselves. For example, although pain causes suffering, it serves as a warning signal for a person to discover a hidden illness that otherwise would remain undetected. Also, many physical evils (such as poverty, hardship, sickness, etc.) are actually man-made and not due to God. God wills them indirectly, so as to teach us a lesson and to call us back to Himself (CCC 309-314).

THE ANGELS



Fig 1.1.4 Angels Singing Praises to God

15. Which are the noblest of God's creatures?

The noblest creatures created by God are the angels. The angels are intelligent and purely spiritual creatures. (CCC 330) They really have no wings nor material figure because they have no bodies. Artists draw them with wings and human form only to help our imagination. The wings remind us that they are God's messengers.

16. Why did God create the angels?

God created the angels so as to be honored and served by them, and also to be happy with Him forever in Heaven. They sing praises to God unceasingly. (CCC 331-333)

17. Were all the angels faithful to God?

No, not all the angels remained faithful to God. Many of them became so proud of their power, their intelligence and their beauty, that they refused to serve God. As a result, they were expelled from Heaven by St. Michael the Archangel, and were condemned to suffer forever in hell. (CCC 391-395)



Fig 1.1.5 St. Michael the Archangel

18. What are the angels called who were expelled from Heaven?

The angels banished from Heaven are called fallen angels, demons or devils, and their chief is called Satan (Rev 12:9).

19. Are demons real, and can they harm us?

Oh, they are as real as the noon-day sun! Unfortunately, there are many people today who don't believe that demons and hell actually exist. And the demons love it! They know that they can do people more harm the less people are on guard against them. Demons harm us by tempting us to sin. Don't think they aren't around just because you don't see them. They use the radio, the TV, the Internet, the video games and all your favorite devices to bring evil thoughts into your heart. Keeping you away from prayer and from God is their specialty! And they are very crafty, too. Don't think for a moment that they will appear to you as ugly, horrible-looking creatures, which they are. No, they will appear to you as enjoyable and fun creatures, so you will not suspect that they are demons in disguise. They will appear to you in the form of fun games, fun shows, fun companions, so that you will be enticed to neglect your duties, your studies, your prayers and God. They are so crafty. That's how Satan tempted our first parents, Adam and Eve. He appeared as a harmless serpent and lied to them. That is why he is called "the father of liars" (John 8:44).

20. Why do demons tempt us?

The demons tempt us because they envy us. They desire our eternal damnation because of their hatred of God whose image is reflected in us. However, God allows them to tempt us so that we may overcome them by His grace and show our loyalty to Him.

21. What do you call the angels who remained faithful to God?

The angels who remained faithful to God are called the good angels, heavenly spirits, or simply angels.

22. How many angels are there?

The angels in Heaven are innumerable. The prophet Daniel said, “Thousands of thousands ministered to Him (God), and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before Him” (Dan 7:10).

23. Are all angels equal in dignity?

No, they differ in power, wisdom and dignity according to their rank or office. There are nine ranks or “choirs” of angels mentioned in the Bible. These are:

Seraphim (Isa 6:1-7)

Cherubim (Gen 3:24)

Thrones (Col 1:16)

Dominations or Dominions (Eph 1:21; Col 1:16)

Virtues (Eph 1:21)

Powers (Eph 1:21; 3:10; Col 1:16; 2:15)

Principalities (Rom 8:38; Eph 1:21; 3:10; Col 1:16; 2:15)

Archangels (1 Thes 4:15)

Angels (Gen 19; Tob 12:15; Matt 1:20; Rev 2:1-3:14).

Among those who rebelled against God were the *principalities* and *powers* who are also now on earth to tempt us (Eph 6:12).

24. Do angels have names?

We know three angels by name because they are mentioned in Holy Scripture. They are St. Michael, St. Gabriel, and St. Raphael. Only St. Michael was called an archangel (Jude 1:9), but of course, St. Raphael and St. Gabriel could be archangels, too.

- a) **St. Michael the Archangel** – was the one who led the good angels in the fight against Satan (Rev 12:7-9). He was also described as “the great prince, who stands for the children of thy people (Israel)” (Dan 12:1).



Fig 1.1.6 St. Raphael with Bishop Domonte

The name “Raphael” means “one who heals.” For this reason St. Raphael is often associated with the angel in St. John’s Gospel who stirs the pool of Bethesda to heal the sick (John 5:4). The painting above was made by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617-1682).

- b) **St. Gabriel** – was the one who appeared to Zachary to announce the birth of St. John the Baptist (Luke 1:11-19), and who announced to the Virgin Mary that she was going to be the Mother of God (Luke 1:26-38).
- c) **St. Raphael** – appeared in the book of Tobit and said: “I am the angel Raphael, one of the seven who stand before the Lord” (Tob 12:15).

25. How powerful are the angels?

They are very powerful. In the Old Testament the prophet Isaiah spoke of one angel single-handedly destroying an Assyrian army of 185,000 men (Isa 37:36).

26. What became of the angels who remained faithful to God?

The angels who remained faithful to God stayed in Heaven to enjoy the vision of God forever, and to love, bless and praise Him without end.

27. Is praising God all that the good angels do?

Some of them also act as God’s ministers and messengers, while others act as our *guardian angels*. The belief that every human being has a personal guardian angel especially assigned by God to watch over him “from infancy to death” is not merely a pious or popular Catholic belief. It is official Catholic teaching. (CCC 336)

28. Do individuals alone have a guardian angel?

Many people think that guardian angels protect individual souls only. Yet we know from St. John the Evangelist that each church or community of believers also has its own guardian angel (Rev 1:20). It is not impossible that angels are assigned to watch, not just churches, but entire cities and nations.



Fig 1.1.7 Guardian Angel Protecting a Child from the Demon

Most pictures of guardian angels show them protecting children from physical harm. The above picture shows the guardian angel protecting a child from the devil, which is what the guardian angel mostly does. Our guardian angel watches us “from infancy to death” (CCC 336). We should therefore be particularly devoted to our guardian angel, honoring him, invoking his aid, following his inspirations throughout our life.

MAN

29. Which is the noblest creature God has placed on earth?

The noblest creature God has placed on earth is man.

30. What is man?

Man is a rational creature composed of body and soul.

31. What is the soul?

The soul is the noblest part of man, because it is a spiritual substance, endowed with intelligence and will, capable of knowing God and of possessing Him forever.

32. Can the human soul be seen and touched?

The soul can neither be seen nor touched, because it is a spirit.

33. Will the human soul die when the body dies?

The human soul never dies, because a spirit has no parts that can decompose. A spirit is, therefore, indivisible and immortal.

34. Is man free in his actions?

Yes, man is free in his actions. Each one feels within himself that he can do a thing or leave it undone, or do one thing rather than another.

35. Explain human freedom by an example.

If I voluntarily tell a lie, I know that I could have left it unsaid or remained silent, or I could also speak differently and tell the truth.

36. Why do we say that man was created to the image and likeness of God?

We say that man was created to the image and likeness of God because the human soul is spiritual and rational, free in its operations, and capable of knowing and loving Him forever. These perfections reflect the image of God in us. (CCC 1705)

37. In what state did God place our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise?

God placed our first parents, Adam and Eve, originally in the state of innocence and grace. In fact, sanctifying grace was the chief gift that God gave our first parents, for it made them friends of God and gave them the right to Heaven. Unfortunately, Adam and Eve lost this grace when they committed sin.

38. What do you call the original state of Adam and Eve before they fell to sin?

The state of Adam and Eve before the Fall is called “the state of original justice.” This state was characterized by a triple harmony. In the state of original justice Adam and Eve were in *harmony with God*; they were in *harmony with themselves*; and they were in *harmony with the rest of creation*. (CCC 374)

- a.) Adam and Eve were in harmony with God because they enjoyed God’s friendship, and God provided them with everything they needed. Since they were created *as adults*, God gave them the gift of **knowledge**. By this gift they didn’t have to learn how to walk, to speak, or to manage their lives, because God already gave them these skills and abilities at the moment of creation.
- b.) Adam and Eve were also in harmony with themselves, not only by being at peace with each other, but internally or within themselves, because their passion was perfectly subject to reason. This is called the gift of **integrity**. By this gift Adam and Eve suffered no evil inclination, because their passion and sensible desires were in perfect accord with the rule of reason.
- c.) Adam and Eve were also in harmony with the rest of creation. This means that they were not only at peace with all the animals, but also with all the elements and forces of nature. By their gifts of **immunity** and **immortality**, Adam and Eve were created free from all sickness, pain and sorrow, and even death.

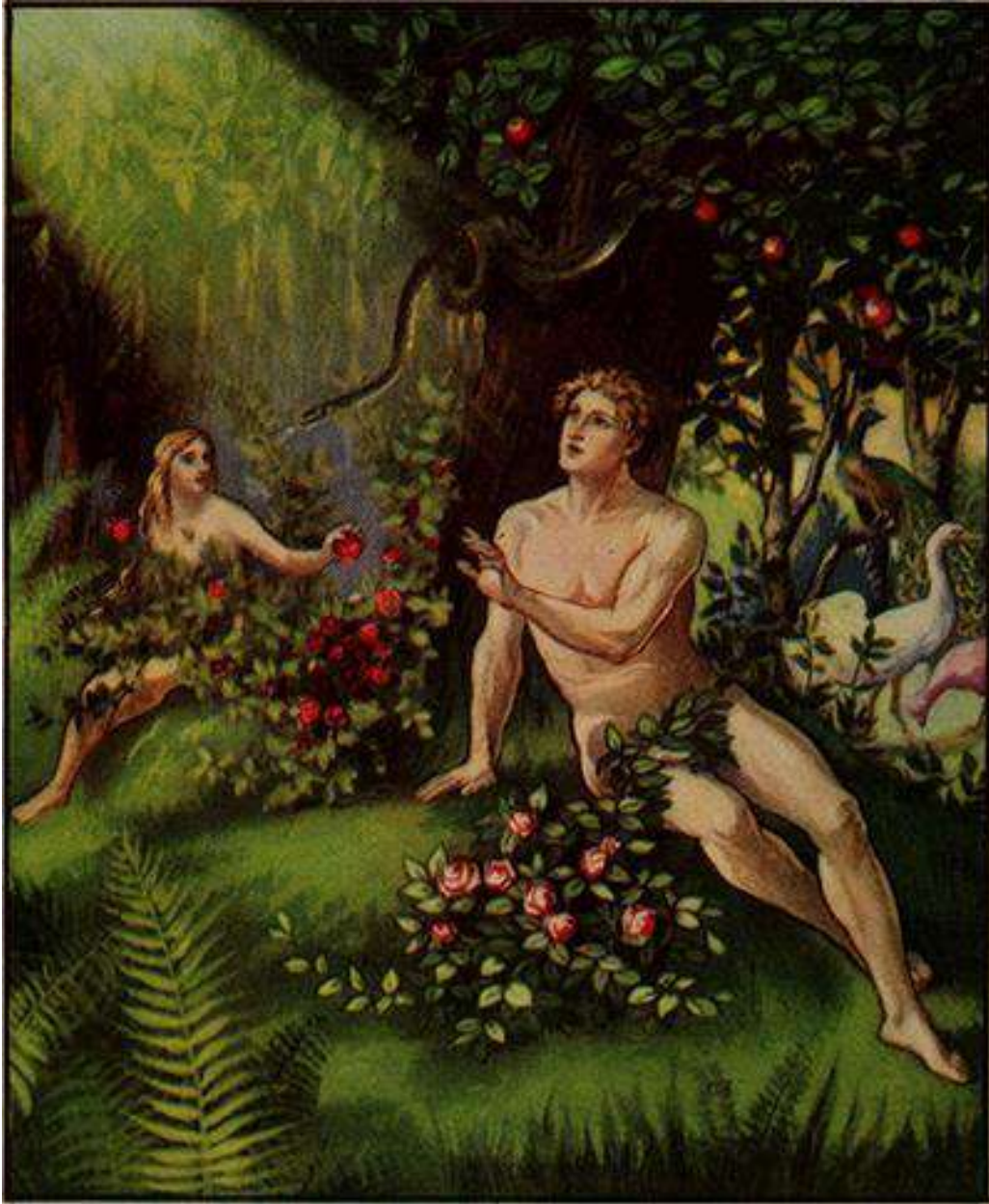


Fig 1.1.8 Adam and Eve in Paradise

39. How did Adam and Eve commit the first sin?

God told them not to eat the fruit of a certain tree that grew in the Garden of Eden (or Paradise). But the devil appeared to them in the form of a serpent, and told them that if they were to eat the fruit, they would also become all-knowing and all powerful like God. That was a lie. But Adam and Eve believed it, and they disobeyed God by eating the forbidden fruit.

40. What was the nature of Adam's sin?

Adam's sin was a sin of pride and grave disobedience.

41. What happened to Adam and Eve on account of their sin?

They lost the *grace* of God and the right they had to the Kingdom of Heaven. They were driven out of Paradise and lost the triple harmony that existed in their state of original justice. For, not only did they break their friendship with God, but they also lost the internal harmony within themselves and their harmony with the rest of creation. In Paradise Adam and Eve didn't have to work because God, their Friend, provided them with everything they needed. But outside of Paradise, they had to work to sustain themselves. And without the special gifts of knowledge, integrity, immunity and immortality, they had to learn everything, including how to harness the forces of nature and how to tame the animals that once were subject to them. They also became subject to all sorts of misery and illnesses, and condemned to death.

42. If Adam and Eve had not sinned, would they have been exempt from death?

Yes. If Adam and Eve had not sinned, and if they had remained faithful to God, then, after a happy and peaceful sojourn here on earth, and without dying, they and their descendants would have been transferred by God into Heaven to enjoy a life of unending happiness with Him.

43. Did Adam and Eve deserve the special gifts originally given to them?

No, those gifts were absolutely free from God. They are called "preternatural gifts" because they were *over and beyond what Adam and Eve would have naturally received*, had not God given them a very special love. Thus, one could not justly blame God for taking those gifts away from them after the Fall.

44. Does this sin belong to Adam and Eve alone?

This sin is not the sin of Adam and Eve alone, but is also our sin, though in a different sense. In Adam and Eve it was an **actual sin** because they committed it by an act of their will. In us it is not an actual sin but is called **original sin** because we acquire it, not by actually committing it, but just because we *originated* from Adam and Eve who actually committed it.

45. How can original sin be transmitted to all humans?

When parents lose their home to fire because of their carelessness, don't the children also lose their home? Of course, they do. When Adam and Eve lost their special gifts and privileges because of their sin, we, their descendants, also lost the same gifts and privileges. This loss is an inherited loss and punishment. And that is what original sin is. It is the sin and punishment of all human beings, which they inherited from Adam and Eve by having originated from them. Every descendant of Adam and Eve is born without the right to enter Heaven, and without the gifts of integrity, immortality, immunity and knowledge.

46. Are all humans born with original sin?

Yes, except the Blessed Virgin Mary and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Since the Virgin Mary was destined to be the Mother of God, she was preserved from original sin by a singular privilege of Almighty God, who applied the future merits of Jesus Christ to her when she was conceived. This special privilege is called the *privilege of her Immaculate Conception*.

It is by her Immaculate Conception that Mary would crush the head of the serpent (representing Satan), a prophecy given when God drove Adam and Eve out of Paradise. God told the serpent: "I will put enmities between you and the woman (Eve), and your seed and her seed (Mary): **she shall crush your head**, and you shall lie in wait for her heel" (Gen 3:15).



Fig 1.1.9 Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception

Did you notice what our Lady is stepping on? Can you explain what it means?

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47. Is Mary's Immaculate Conception an article of faith?

Yes, it is an article of our faith, although it is not one of the twelve articles of the Apostle's Creed. It is one of the teachings of the Church that we learned from Sacred Tradition. Although this teaching was disputed at one time, the Apostles and the early Church felt that it would be an embarrassment to the Son of God to have a sinful mother. So, on December 8, 1854, Pope Pius IX ended all discussions by defining the Immaculate Conception of Mary as an infallible dogma that must be believed and accepted by all. (CCC 491)

48. Why did Jesus Christ not contract original sin?

Our Lord was not born with original sin because He did not originate from Adam, since He did not have a human father. Instead, He received the holiness of God the Father, His true Father in Heaven. Of course, Jesus Christ also received His human nature from His mother (Mary) who is a descendant of Adam. But because of the privilege of her Immaculate Conception, the Virgin Mary was born without original sin. Therefore, Jesus Christ did not inherit original sin through her either.

49. If everyone, except the Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ, is born with original sin, how could humanity be saved?

No one would be saved, if God did not show mercy toward them.

50. What was the mercy shown by God to the human race?

When He drove them out of Paradise, God promised Adam and Eve that He would send them a Redeemer or Savior, who would regain for them and their descendants the gift of *grace* and the right to the Kingdom of Heaven. The Redeemer would also free them from the slavery of sin² and of the devil.

² The "slavery of sin" refers to our tendency to sin, or to our weakness to control our passions and evil inclinations which, *as a result of sin*, often prompt us to avoid what is good and to do acts that we know to be sinful. St. Paul describes it thus: "For I do not that good which I will: but the evil which I hate, that I do" (Rom 7:15).

51. Who is the promised Redeemer or Savior of the world?

The promised Redeemer or Savior is the Son of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, who took a human nature without losing His divinity. As man, He took the name of Jesus Christ. By becoming man, God the Son was able to pay for the sin of man by obeying God the Father even though it led to His suffering and death.

52. When did God the Son become human?

He became man over 2000 years ago in the womb of the Virgin Mary. He was born in a stable at Bethlehem on Christmas day. That was the first Christmas. Shepherds came to visit Him. Then, a few days after His birth, three wise men (or “the three kings”) came from the East to visit Him, showing that He was the Lord of the ignorant as well as of the learned, the Lord of the poor and of the rich alike.

ARTICLE 2: “*And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.*”

1. What does the second article of the Creed teach us?

The second article of the Creed teaches us that the Son of God is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity; that, like the Father, He is God eternal, almighty, Creator and Lord; that He became man to save us; and that the Son of God, made man, is called Jesus Christ.

2. Why is the Second Person called the Son?

The Second Person is called the Son because He is begotten by the Father from all eternity by way of intelligence. For this reason He is also called the Eternal Word of the Father.³

3. Since we are also sons of God, why is Jesus Christ called the only Son of God the Father?

Jesus Christ is called the only Son of God the Father, because He alone is His Son by nature, whereas we are His sons by adoption.

4. Why is the Son of God, made man, called Jesus Christ?

The name “Jesus” means Savior or “God saves.” The Son of God, made man, is called Jesus because He came to save us from the punishments due to our sins. When the angel Gabriel told the Virgin Mary that she was chosen to be the Mother of God, he also told her that the Baby that would be born of her was to be named Jesus (Luke 1:31). And He is also called “Christ,” which means consecrated or anointed, because He has been anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power. (CCC 430, 436)

³ In us the *word* is the verbal representation of our ideas or mental images, and these ideas and images proceed from our minds. In God the Word also represents the Image which proceeds from the Father’s eternal Act of knowing Himself. By Knowing Himself, the Father forms an Image of Himself. This “Image of the Father,” this Eternal Word, is God the Son. (CCC 241)



Fig 1.2.1 The Annunciation

5. Why is Jesus Christ called our Lord?

Jesus Christ is called our Lord, because this title indicates His sovereignty, supreme power and authority over us. To call Jesus “Lord” is to believe in His divinity. (CCC 449, 455)

6. Did people have any knowledge about our Lord Jesus Christ before He was born?

Yes, prior to His birth people were already expecting that a Savior was coming because it was promised by God to our first parents, Adam and Eve. There were many prophecies that foretold the coming of the Redeemer.

7. What did the prophecies foretell of the Redeemer?

Regarding the Redeemer, the prophecies foretold whose family He was to come from; the place and time of His birth; His miracles; the circumstances of His passion and death; His Resurrection and even His Ascension into Heaven. Actually, that was how the three wise men (or the three kings) knew when and where Christ was to be born. They learned it from the prophecies written in ancient scrolls and manuscripts. They went to Judea looking for Him.

8. How do we know that Jesus Christ is really the promised Savior and Redeemer of the world?

We know that Jesus Christ is truly the promised Savior and Redeemer of the world because in Him all the prophecies about the Savior were fulfilled.

9. How do we know that Jesus Christ is true man?

We know that Jesus Christ is true man because He was born of a human mother, the Virgin Mary. He has a body and soul like ours. He has our human nature. As true man, Christ was born just like us. He grew up, He worked, He ate, He slept, and did everything that normal human beings do. However, St. Thomas Aquinas suggested that Christ never got sick, nor suffer any abnormality, nor commit sin. He had no physical sickness, deformity, or sin because He was a perfect human. He could feel pain and suffer injury because a normal body would feel pain when wounded. He could get hungry and thirsty because these are normal for any human body. He had everything that a normal human body has. But sin, sickness, physical and psychological abnormalities are not normal for a human being. So, St. Thomas thought that Christ, being a perfect human being, did not have those.

10. How do we know that Jesus Christ is true God?

We know that Jesus Christ is true God because (1) God the Father said of Him, “This is My beloved Son...” first, when Christ was baptized by St. John the Baptist (Matt 3:17), and second, during

the Transfiguration (Matt 17:5); (2) The angel Gabriel told the Virgin Mary that her Baby would be the Son of God (Luke 1:35); (3) Christ Himself said that He is true God (Mark 14:61-62), and He confirmed it by performing marvelous miracles.

11. What miracles did Jesus Christ perform that shows His divinity?

Besides the fact that He rose from the dead, the chief miracles performed by Jesus Christ are restoring health to the sick, sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf mute, and life to the dead. In one instance He also walked on water, calmed the storm, changed water into wine, and multiplied bread and fish to feed 5000 men, not counting women and children (Matt 14:21).

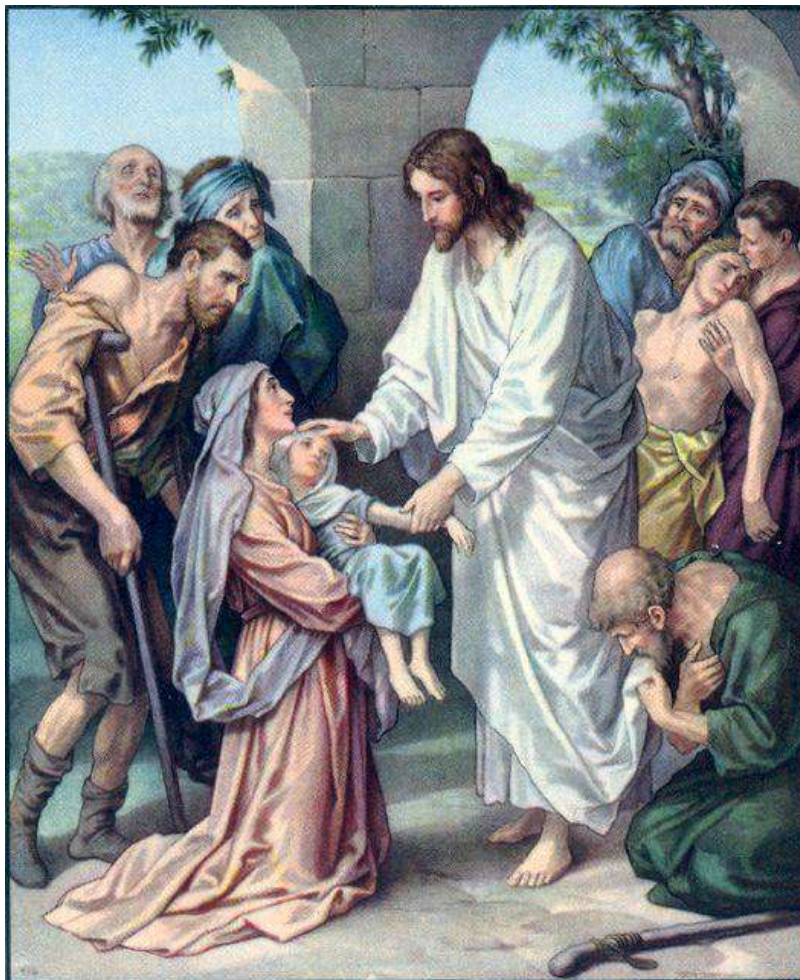


Fig 1.2.2 Christ Healing the Sick

ARTICLE 3: *“Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary.”*

1. What does the third article of the Creed teach us?

The third article of the Creed teaches that by the operation of the Holy Spirit the Son of God took a body and soul like ours, in the chaste womb of the Virgin Mary, and that He was born of that Virgin.

2. Did the Father and the Son also take part in forming the body and creating the soul of Jesus Christ?

Yes, all three Divine Persons cooperated in forming the body and in creating the soul of Jesus Christ.

3. Why then is it simply said that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and not also by the Father and the Son?

It is simply said that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit because the Incarnation of the Son of God is a work of goodness and love. Works of goodness and love are attributed to the Holy Spirit in the same manner as works of divine power are attributed to the Father, although all three Divine Persons also cooperate in works of divine omnipotence, such as in the creation of the world.

4. Did God the Son cease to be God when He became human?

No, He remained **true God** and **true man**, a God-man. It is difficult to understand how God can be man at the same time. This is another profound truth of our faith, which is why it is called a “mystery,” – the **Mystery of the Incarnation**. (CCC 464-469)

5. Are there, then, two natures in Jesus Christ, one human and one divine?

Yes, in Jesus Christ, who is both God and man, there are two natures, the divine and the human. He is perfect God and perfect man, a true God-man. There is no one else like Him. He is the only Person who is true God and at the same time true man. (CCC 481)

6. In Jesus Christ are there also two persons, the divine and the human?

No, Christ is only ONE Person, although He has two natures. As a Person, He is Divine and is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. Jesus Christ, the true God, is the same Divine Person as Jesus Christ, the true man. Therefore, there is only one Person, called Jesus Christ, and He is not a human but a Divine Person.

7. Was Jesus Christ always man?

No, Jesus Christ became human only 2000 years ago when He was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary.



Fig 1.3.1 Mary adoring the Baby Jesus

8. Was Jesus Christ always God?

Yes, Jesus Christ was always God. Because, as the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, He is equal to the Father in being and divinity. So, if the Father was always God, so was Jesus Christ.

9. How many wills are there in Jesus Christ?

In Jesus Christ there are two wills, one human, the other divine.

10. Did Jesus Christ possess a free will?

Yes, Jesus Christ also possessed a free will, but, as a perfect man, He would not choose evil because to choose evil is a defect of freedom, an imperfection rather than a perfection.

11. Are the Son of God and the Son of Mary one and the same Person?

Yes, the Son of God and the Son of Mary are one and the same Person, that is, Jesus Christ, true God and true man.

12. Is the Blessed Virgin the Mother of God?

Yes, because Jesus Christ is God, and Mary is the Mother of Jesus Christ. Therefore, Mary is the Mother of God. (CCC 509)

13. How did Mary become the Mother of Jesus Christ?

Mary conceived and became the Mother of Jesus Christ solely through the power of the Holy Spirit, and without the need of any man. Thus, Jesus Christ did not have a human father, but He had a foster-father or guardian whose name was St. Joseph, the man whom the Virgin Mary was married to.

14. Is it part of our faith that Mary was always a virgin?

Yes, it is part of our faith as Catholics that Mary was always a Virgin, *before, during, and after* the birth of Jesus Christ. She remained a virgin when she conceived Jesus Christ because she conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and not by man. She is, therefore, truly the Virgin of virgins. (CCC 510)

15. What became of her when our Lord left the earth?

She followed St. John the Apostle to whose care she had been entrusted by her Divine Son (John 19:25-27).

16. Where did she die?

Nobody knows. And nobody knows if she died at all. All that we know is that at the end of her sojourn here on earth, she was lifted up body and soul into Heaven. (CCC 966)

There are some who believe that because death is a penalty for sin, and Mary was sinless, therefore Mary did not die but was lifted up straight to Heaven when the time came for her to be reunited with her Son.

Others believe that since Mary was the companion of Jesus in sorrow, then if Jesus Himself died, then Mary also would have died, not as a penalty for sin, but in order to make her compassionate suffering with her Son more complete. Those who believe that Mary died also believe that after three days, Mary was raised from the dead and was lifted up into Heaven.

Note the difference between the Virgin Mary and our Lord Jesus. Because Jesus Christ is God, He rose from the dead and ascended into Heaven *by His own power*.⁴ On the other hand, because Mary is only human, she needed to be raised from the dead (if she died) and lifted up into Heaven *by the power of God*. This is the reason why we say that Jesus Christ *ascended* into Heaven by Himself, while the Virgin Mary *was assumed* into Heaven by God. We celebrate Christ's **Ascension** into Heaven by His own power, but we celebrate Mary's **Assumption** into Heaven by the power of God.

⁴ As man, of course, Christ needed His body to be raised from the dead by God. This is why we read texts like, "God raised Him up from the dead on the third day" (Acts 13:30). But, as God, Christ rose from the dead by His power, for He said: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). As St. John clarified, Christ was speaking of the temple of His body (John 2:21).



Fig 1.3.2 The Assumption of Mary

Notice how the artist shows Mary being lifted up by the angels, rather than going up into Heaven by herself.

17. Is the Assumption of Mary also an article of our faith?

Yes, it is also an article of faith. Like the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, the dogma about the Assumption of Mary into Heaven is not one of the twelve articles of the Apostle's Creed, but it is a teaching that is binding on all Catholics. It was defined by Pope Pius XII as an infallible teaching on November 1, 1950. This means that one may doubt whether the Virgin Mary died or not, but one may not doubt that she was assumed into Heaven when her time came to be reunited with her Son. The dogma of the Assumption of Mary must be believed by all Catholics. Those who do not accept the dogma of the Assumption of Mary, the Immaculate Conception, or any of the articles of the Creed, are called *heretics*, and are considered excluded from the Catholic Church.

18. When was Mary assumed into Heaven?

The exact year of Mary's Assumption into Heaven is not recorded anywhere. But some of the visionaries (St. Bridget of Sweden and Blessed Catherine Emmerich) said that the Virgin Mary stayed on earth for 15 or 16 more years after the Ascension of Jesus Christ. Another visionary, the Venerable Mary of Agreda, said that the Virgin Mary was about 70 years old when she was lifted up into Heaven. However, these are approximate estimates, not dogma.

19. What happened when the Virgin Mary entered Heaven?

It is the pious belief of many Catholics that upon her arrival in Heaven, the Virgin Mary was crowned **Queen of Heaven**. This belief has not been defined as an infallible teaching, but it is a logical sequel to the dogma of the Assumption. Since Mary has been associated with Jesus Christ in the work of the redemption, it is only right that she also shares, in a subordinate way, the royal dignity of her Son. Just as Jesus Christ is regarded as our Lord and King, Mary is hailed as our Lady and Queen.



Fig 1.3.3 The Coronation of Mary

ARTICLE 4: *“Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.”*

1. What does the fourth article of the Creed teach us?

The fourth article of the Creed teaches us that to redeem the world from sin Jesus Christ suffered under Pontius Pilate (the Governor of Judea), died on the cross, and, on being taken down therefrom, was buried.

2. How did Jesus Christ redeem the world from sin?

Christ redeemed the world from sin by suffering and dying on the cross. He was first scourged, crowned with thorns, then crucified.

3. Could not the Father just forgive Adam’s sin instead of sending His Son to suffer for us?

Adam’s sin had a penalty to be paid, which was death, and Divine Justice requires that it be paid. The Father sent His Son to pay the penalty and satisfy Divine Justice.

4. Would it not have been enough for an angel to come and redeem us from sin?

No, because the offense given to God by Adam’s sin was, in a sense, infinite. The gravity of an offense is measured by the dignity of the person offended: the higher the dignity of the offended person, the more grievous is the offense. Thus, it is a more serious offense to strike a military general than to strike an ordinary soldier. Since the Person offended by Adam’s sin was God, who is Infinite in dignity and perfection, the offense that Adam caused by His sin was, in that sense, infinitely grievous. No reparation by any creature would be adequate to compensate the offense done to God’s majesty. No reparation made by even the entire world, nor by an angel, nor by the entire heavenly host, would be enough to satisfy the damage caused by man’s sin.



Fig 1.4.1 A Pendant Showing the Instruments of Christ's Passion
From the Metropolitan Museum of Art

5. Why did the Son of God Himself need to come and redeem us?

Just as the seriousness of an offense is measured by the dignity of the person offended, so the value of a reparation is measured by the dignity of the person making the reparation. The higher is the dignity of the person making the reparation, the more valuable is the reparation. If the person making the reparation is a Divine Person, the reparation will have infinite merit, and will be sufficient to satisfy an infinitely grievous offense. This is why the Son of God had to come and become human so that, by His sacrifice, a satisfactory reparation can be made for man's sin.

6. What does the word "suffered" denote?

The word "suffered" denotes all the pains endured by Christ during His passion.

7. Did Jesus Christ suffer as God or as man?

Jesus Christ suffered as man; as God He could neither suffer nor die.

8. What kind of punishment was death on the cross?

The punishment known as the *crucifixion* was in those days the cruelest and the most disgraceful of all punishments. It was the kind of punishment usually reserved only for criminals. Although Christ was innocent as a Lamb, He was punished and treated like a criminal. In fact, He was crucified together with two thieves.

9. Who was it that condemned Jesus Christ to be crucified?

He who condemned Jesus Christ to be crucified was Pontius Pilate, the Governor of Judea who, though recognizing Christ's innocence, cowardly yielded to the threats of the people of Jerusalem. The Jews told him that if he would not condemn Christ, who was reputed to be the King of kings, then he was not being loyal to Caesar, the Emperor of Rome. Pilate did not want to get in trouble with Caesar, so he handed Christ to the Jews to be crucified.

10. So, were the Jews responsible for Christ's death on the cross?

Yes, but the Jews were not solely responsible for Christ's death. Actually, we sinners are all responsible for Christ's passion and death, for if we had not sinned, Christ would not have come to suffer for us. Therefore, the Church does not lay the entire blame for the sufferings of Jesus Christ on the Jews alone, but also on Christians and all sinners. St. Francis of Assisi even said, "Nor did demons crucify him; it is you who have crucified him and crucify him still, when you delight in your vices and sins" (CCC 598).

11. Was Christ's passion and death determined solely by the free decisions of men?

No, it was also part of God's predetermined plan of salvation. For Christ came in order to redeem us from sin. God allowed and knew from eternity all the events leading to His passion and crucifixion, without violating the freedom of the people who were involved in bringing about God's plan of salvation. The Jews, King Herod, Pontius Pilate, and all those who participated in making God's plan unfold in history, were not passive players acting according to God's predestined plan, but were each actively using their free decisions in bringing about, while unbeknown to them, God's redemptive plan. (CCC 599, 600)

12. What then was the ultimate or first cause of Christ's passion and death?

The ultimate cause, or the first initiative, that brought about Christ's passion and death is God's eternal love for us. From eternity God's benevolent love, and without merit on our part, conceived the Incarnation of the Son of God, so that the damage caused by Adam's Fall – already present in His eternal vision, – could be repaired. (CCC 604)

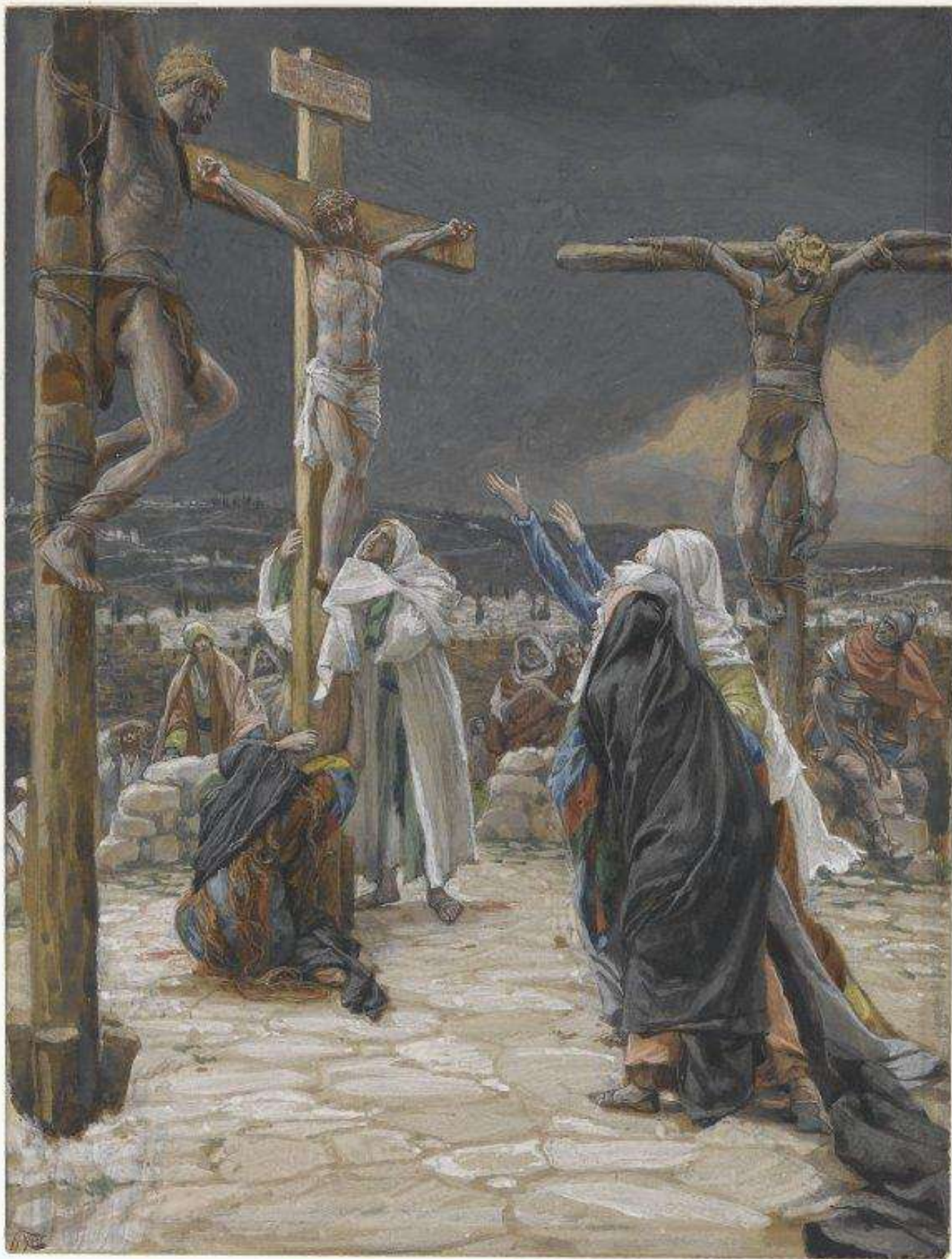


Fig 1.4.2 Christ Crucified between Two Thieves

13. Where was Jesus Christ crucified?

Jesus Christ was crucified on Mount Calvary (Matt 27:33), a place called *Golgotha* in Hebrew (John 19:17).

14. Could not Jesus Christ have freed Himself from the hands of Pilate and the Jews?

Yes, Jesus Christ could have freed Himself from the hands of Pilate and the Jews, but knowing that it was His Father's Will that He should redeem us from sin, He voluntarily accepted the death on the cross and offered His life to the Father. (CCC 606)

15. What did Jesus Christ do while on the cross?

On the cross Jesus Christ prayed for His enemies; gave His Most Blessed Mother as a Mother to St. John, and, in his person, to all of us. Christ offered up His death in sacrifice, and satisfied the justice of God for the sins of humankind.

16. If Christ died on the cross and Christ is God, then could we say that God died on the cross?

To say "God died on the cross" is misleading because God never dies. To avoid confusion, it is better to say, "A Divine Person died on the cross," rather than simply saying, "God died on the cross." For although God, as God, never dies, the Divine Person, Jesus Christ, has a human nature that can die. (CCC 468)

17. Was it necessary for Christ to suffer as much as He did?

No, it was not absolutely necessary for Jesus Christ to suffer as much as He did, because each of His acts being of infinite value, the least of His sufferings would have sufficed for our redemption.

18. Why, then, did Jesus Christ suffer so much?

Jesus Christ suffered so much in order to satisfy divine justice all the more abundantly, to display His love for us still more, and to inspire us with the deepest horror of sin.

19. Did anything remarkable happen when Christ died?

Yes, at the death of Jesus Christ, the sun was darkened, the earth trembled, the veil of the temple was torn in half, graves opened and many of the dead arose (Matt 27:51-52).

20. Was the divinity separated from the body and soul of Jesus Christ by His death?

No. At His death the Divine Person, Jesus Christ, continued to assume His body and soul. Therefore, only the soul of Christ was separated from the body, but His body and soul *continued to exist in His Person*. This is why at His death Christ's body was not reduced into a mere cadaver, but remained sacred, divine and incorrupt. (CCC 626, 627, 630)

21. For whom did Jesus Christ die?

Jesus Christ died for all men, and made satisfaction for all. (CCC 605)

22. If Jesus Christ died for the salvation of all men, will all men be saved?

Jesus Christ died for all, but not all are saved because not all will acknowledge Him. Not all observe His Law, and not all avail themselves of the means of salvation He has left us.

23. To be saved is it enough that Jesus Christ died for us?

No, it is not enough for our salvation that Jesus Christ has died for us. It is also necessary that the fruit of His passion and death be applied to each one of us by each one receiving the sacraments and the graces earned by His passion and death, especially the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist.

24. Where was the body of Jesus Christ buried?

The body of Jesus Christ was buried in a new grave, cut out of a rock, on the mount not far from where He was crucified.



Fig 1.4.3 The Burial of Jesus Christ

NOTE: The body of Jesus Christ was wrapped in a long linen cloth, called a shroud (Mark 15:46). After the resurrection, Jesus Christ left the tomb, but the linen cloth remained (Luke 24:12).

ARTICLE 5: “He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead.”

1. What does the fifth article of the Creed teach us?

The fifth article of the Creed teaches us that the soul of Jesus Christ, on being separated from His body, descended to the “hell of the just,” and that on the third day it became united once more to His body, never to be parted from it again.

2. What is here meant by the “hell of the just”?

There are two kinds of “hell”: the *hell of the damned* and the *hell of the just*. Before Christ redeemed us from sin, no one could enter Heaven, because it was closed for us by Adam’s sin. The souls of bad people who had died went straight to the “hell of the damned,” while the souls of good people who had died went to the “hell of the just,” where they waited until Christ accomplished our redemption by His death.

The **hell of the damned** (Greek *Gehenna*, or Hebrew *Gai Hinnom*) is where the devils and demons are punished. This is also the place where the souls of bad people go when they die with a mortal sin in their soul. The bad souls that go there will suffer hell-fire together with the demons forever. There will be no end to their pain and suffering.

The **hell of the just** (Greek *Hades*, or Hebrew *Sheol*) was the underworld, or the abode of the dead, a temporary place where the souls of good people go after death. This is the place where they waited until Christ came to accomplish our redemption. There were no demons nor devils in the hell of the just, and the human souls waiting there did not suffer hell-fire. It is called “hell” only because it was a place separate from Heaven and God. The kind of pain that the good souls suffered was the pain of their *longing* for God: “I can’t wait to be in Heaven. I can’t wait to see God.” The

longer they waited, the more they suffered. So, although there was no hell-fire in this place, it was a kind of hell because, unlike Heaven, it was not a place of perfect happiness.

In the fifth article of the Creed we say that Christ descended into “hell.” But He did not descend into the hell of the damned. He went into the hell of the just in order to tell the good souls waiting there the good news that their long wait was over, and that they could now go to Heaven with Him. (CCC 633)

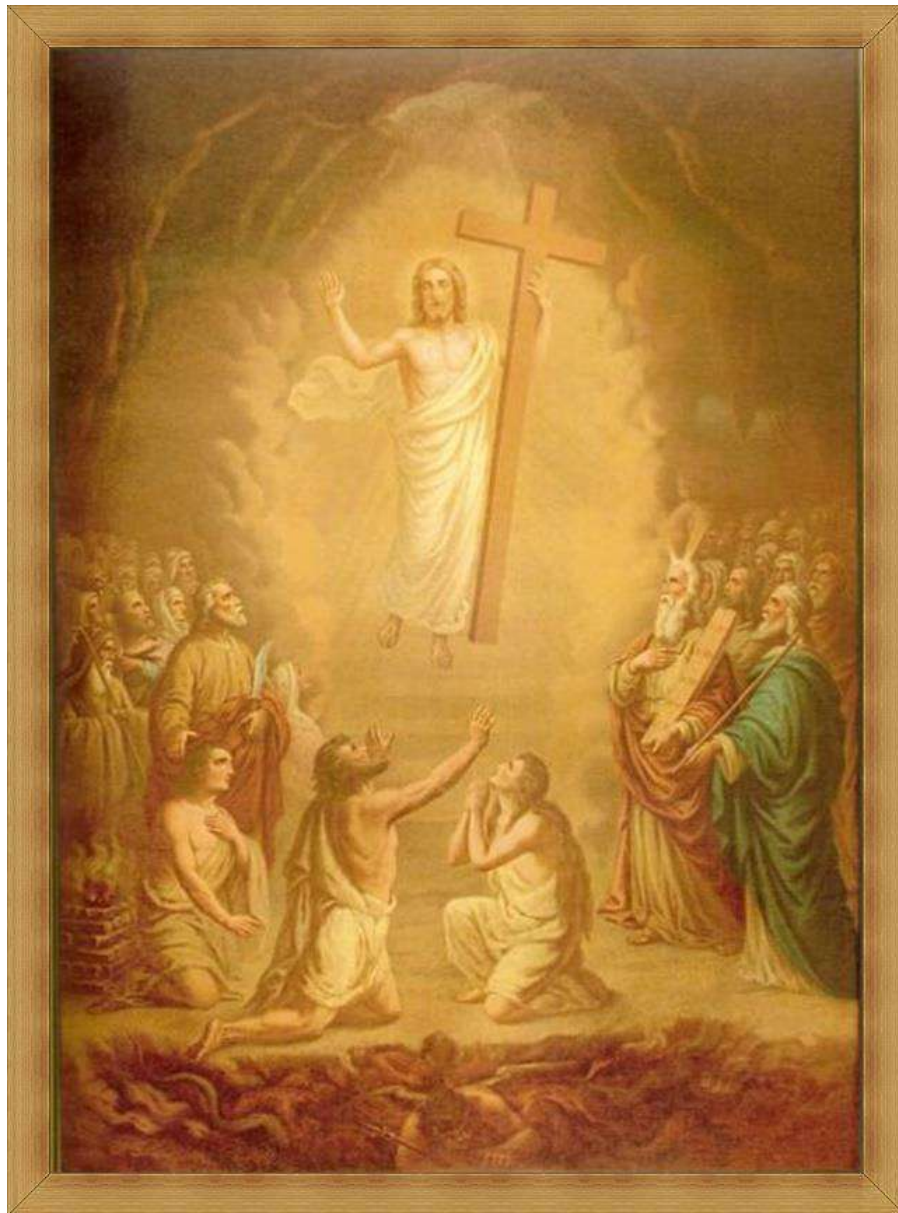


Fig 1.5.1 Christ's Descent into the Hell of the Just

3. Why were not the souls of good people (or the “just”) admitted into Heaven before the death of Jesus Christ?

The souls of good people were not admitted into Heaven before the death of Jesus Christ, because Heaven’s door was closed by the sin of Adam, and it was fitting that Jesus Christ, who reopened it by His death, should be the first to enter it.

4. If the souls of the just already went to Heaven with Christ, does the “hell of the just” still exist today?

No, the hell of the just does not exist anymore because all the good souls who were waiting there had already left and joined Christ in Heaven. However, there is an old belief that there might still exist a similar place, called the “Infants’ Limbo,” where the souls of infants, who have died without Baptism, go. Since they died without being baptized, they still had original sin in their soul. The old belief was that they couldn’t go to Heaven at all, although they would not be punished in the hell of the damned either, since they had no actual sins. In a sense the infants’ limbo was similar to the “hell of the just” because in limbo the souls of infants did not suffer hell-fire, but they were not enjoying heavenly happiness either because they were separated from God. Presently, however, the Catholic Church believes that on account of Christ’s great love for children, there is good reason to hope that God found a way to make salvation available to these infants as well. (CCC 1261)

5. The fifth article said that on the third day Christ rose from the dead. What day was that?

Christ rose from the dead on the morning of Easter Sunday. He died on the cross in the afternoon of Good Friday. That was not exactly three full days based on our method of reckoning. But the Jewish method of counting counts the days, including the first and the last day, even if these were only partial days. Thus, Friday (afternoon) + Saturday + Sunday (morning) = three days.

6. Was the Resurrection of Jesus Christ like the resurrection of other people who had been raised from the dead?

No, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ was not like the resurrection of other people who had been raised from the dead, because He rose by His own power, while the others were raised solely by the power of God.

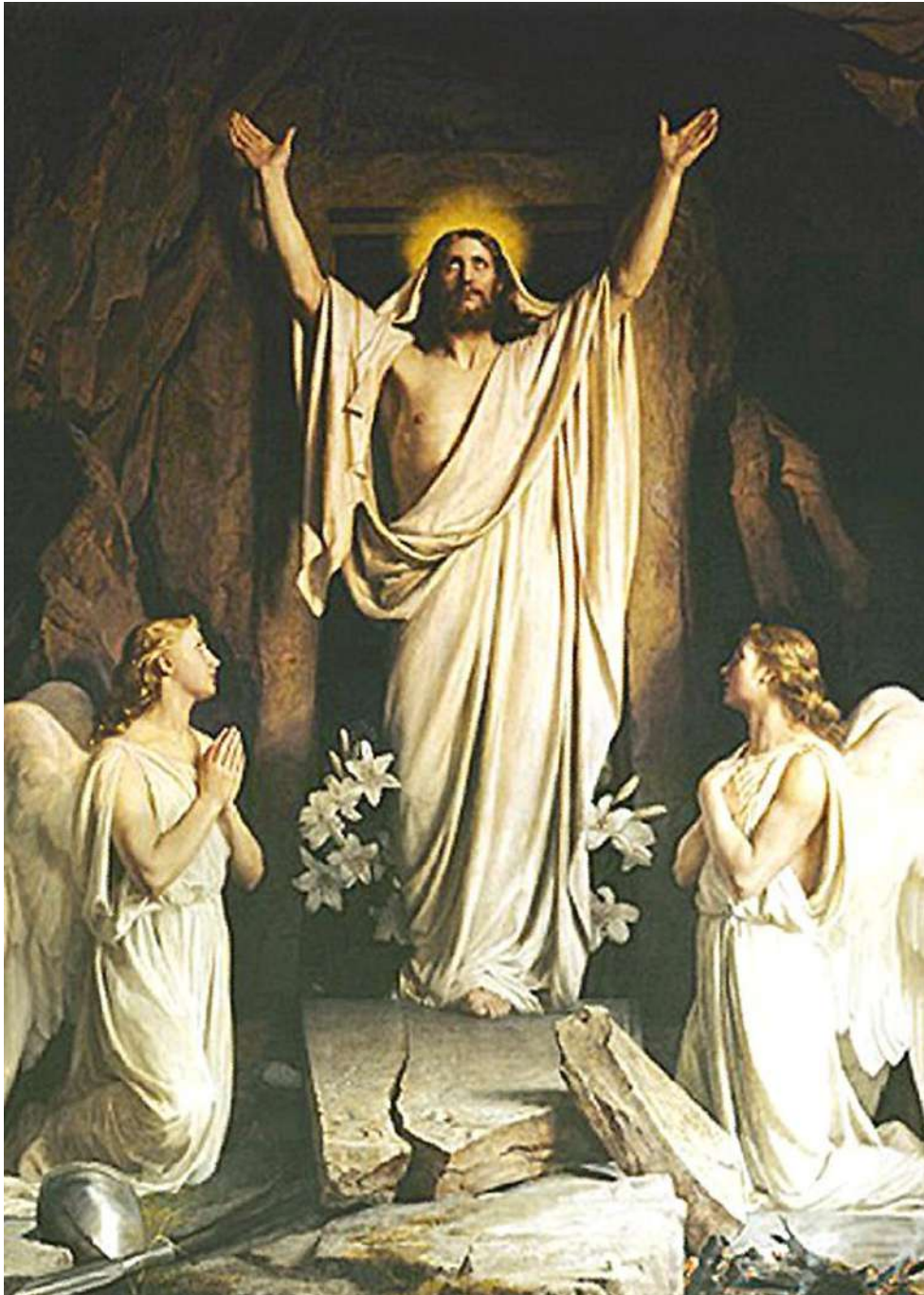


Fig 1.5.2 The Resurrection

7. Was Christ's risen body similar to the bodies of those who had been raised from the dead, such as Lazarus (John 11:43-44)?

No, because Christ's Resurrection was not a simple return to earthly life, but to a glorified bodily life unrestricted by the limitations of space and time. For example, His resurrected body is no longer subject to hunger, sickness or death, and He can now be present anywhere He wants to be at the swiftness of thought. On the other hand, the other people who were also raised from the dead merely returned to their original earthly lives, and their bodies were still subject to the limitations of the present life, which included hunger, sickness and death. (CCC 645)

8. Did Jesus Christ rise from the dead by His power or was He raised from the dead?

As God, Christ rose from the dead *by His power*. Speaking about His body He said, "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again" (John 10:18). *As man*, however, Christ's human body needed to be raised from the dead by God. And the Resurrection of His body from the dead, just like the formation of His body in the womb of the Virgin Mary, was the work of the three Divine Persons. (CCC 648).

ARTICLE 6: *“He ascended into Heaven, is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.”*

1. What does the sixth article of the Creed teach us?

The sixth article of the Creed teaches us that Jesus Christ, forty days after His Resurrection, ascended of Himself into Heaven in the sight of His mother, His Apostles and disciples; and that while as God He was equal to His Father in glory, as man He has been raised above all the angels and saints, and constituted Lord of all things.

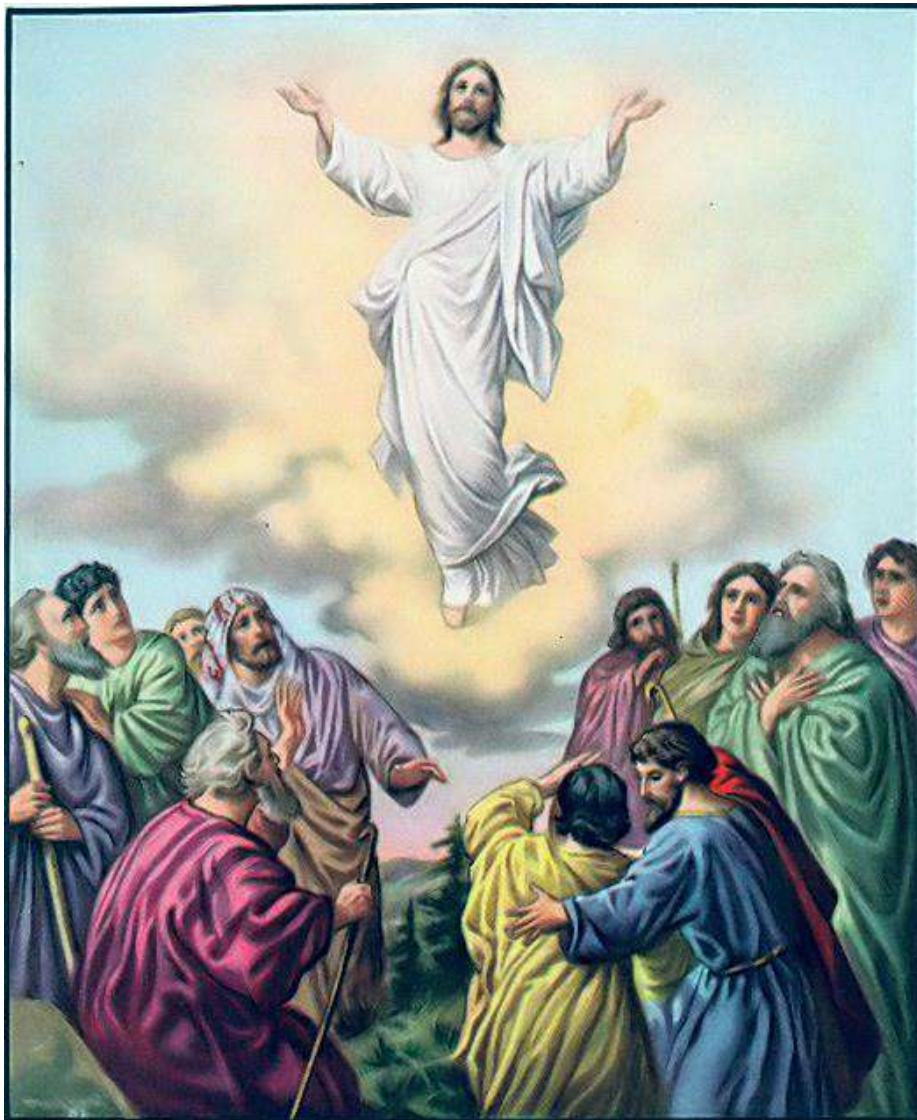


Fig 1.6.1 The Ascension of our Lord

2. Why did Jesus Christ remain forty days on earth after His Resurrection before ascending into Heaven?

After His Resurrection Jesus Christ remained forty days on earth before ascending into Heaven, to prove by several apparitions that He was not a ghost and that He had truly risen, and to instruct the Apostles still further, and to confirm them in the truths of faith.

3. Why did Jesus Christ ascend into Heaven?

Jesus Christ ascended into Heaven: (1) To take possession of the Kingdom He had merited by His death; (2) To prepare the place of our glory, and to be our Mediator and Advocate with the Father, and (3) To send the Holy Spirit upon His Apostles. (CCC 666, 667)

4. Where did Jesus Christ ascend into Heaven?

In Mount Olivet (Acts 1:12), the same place where His bitter passion began (Luke 22:39).

5. Explain the words, “is seated at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.”

The words “is seated” are just a figurative way of signifying the inauguration of Christ’s Kingdom (Dan 7:14). The words, “at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty,” are again a figurative expression because the Father, since He is a spirit, has neither a right nor a left hand. The expression merely denotes that while Christ, *as God*, is equal to His Father in glory, *as man*, He has a place of honor above all creatures, even above the highest angel in Heaven. (CCC 663, 664)

6. Where is Jesus Christ now?

As God, Jesus Christ is everywhere. As man, He is physically in Heaven and sacramentally in the Holy Eucharist. The presence of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament is not a physical presence, which is why you do not see His head, body, arms and legs, but His sacramental presence is nonetheless a *real* presence.



Fig 1.6.2 Christ Seated at the Right Hand of the Father

ARTICLE 7: “From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.”

1. What does the seventh article of the Creed teach us?

The seventh article of the Creed teaches us that at the end of the world Jesus Christ, in all His glory and majesty, will come from Heaven to judge all men, both good and bad, and to give to each of them the reward or the punishment he shall have merited.

2. When will Christ judge us?

Christ will judge us twice: **first**, immediately after death; **second**, on the last day (or at the end of the world). The first judgment is called the *particular judgment*. It is called “particular” because only one particular person is judged. The second judgment (or the Last Judgment) is called the *general judgment*. It is called “general” because every person, including the angels and the devils, will be judged.

3. At the particular judgment what rewards or punishments are appointed for the souls of those who have died?

Souls that are perfectly sinless and who have no attachments to sin will go straight to **Heaven**. Souls that have small sins will also go to Heaven, but they will first have to go to **purgatory** for further purification, and to satisfy any temporal punishments due to their forgiven mortal sins. Souls that have unforgiven mortal sins are condemned to suffer with the demons in the **hell of the damned**.

4. How shall we be judged?

We shall be judged according to all our thoughts, desires, words, works and omissions. We will not be judged only according to how popular, or how successful and how rich we had been in the world, but how much we have loved and served Him and our neighbors for His sake. **IMPORTANT: Read Matthew 25:31-46.**

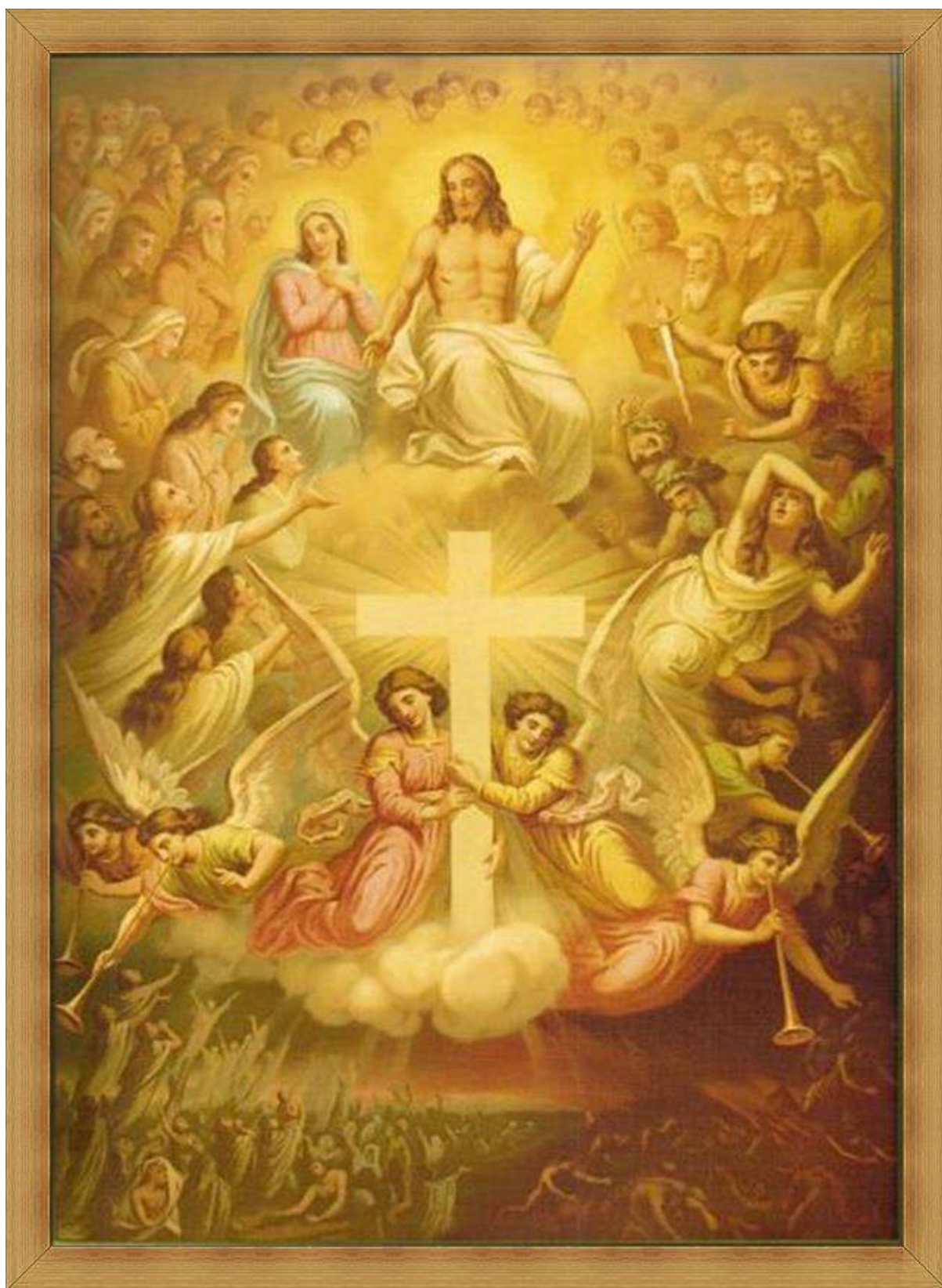


Fig 1.7.1 The Last Judgment

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5. According to our Lord's description in the Gospel of St. Matthew, what will the Just Judge say to the good?

The Just Judge (Jesus Christ) will say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt 25:34). Thus, the good will go to Heaven.

6. And what will the Just Judge say to the wicked?

To the wicked He will say, "Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt 25:41). Thus, the wicked will go to the hell of the damned.

7. If everyone has to be judged by Jesus Christ in particular judgment immediately after death, why must all be judged in the general judgment?

We must all be judged in the general judgment for several reasons: (1) That God may be glorified; (2) That Jesus Christ may be glorified; (3) That the saints may be glorified and receive the reward of their good works; (4) That the wicked may be confounded and receive the punishment that they have deserved; and (5) That along with the soul the body may receive its sentence of reward or punishment.

8. How will God's glory be manifested in the general judgment?

God's glory will be manifested in the general judgment in this way, that all shall then know how justly God governs the world, even though here on earth the good are often afflicted and the wicked are often in prosperity.

9. How will the glory of Jesus Christ be manifested in the general judgment?

The glory of Jesus Christ will be manifested in the general judgment in this way, that He who was unjustly condemned by men, shall then come before the whole world as the Supreme Judge of all.

10. How will the glory of the saints be manifested in the general judgment?

The glory of the saints will be manifested in the general judgment in this way, that many of them who died despised by the wicked, shall be glorified before the whole world.

11. How great will the confusion of the wicked be in the general judgment?

In the general judgment great indeed shall be the confusion of the wicked, especially of those who have oppressed the just and who have tried in this life to be esteemed as men of virtue and goodness. On the last day their most hidden sins will be exposed before the whole world, and everyone will see how wicked they really were (1 Cor 4:5).

12. Will purgatory still exist after the general judgment?

No. After the general judgment there will be only Heaven and Hell. This is because the general judgment will be preceded by the resurrection of all the dead, which includes those in purgatory. (CCC 1038)

13. When will the general judgment take place?

The General Judgment will happen during the second coming of Christ, when He returns in glory. But only the Father knows the day and the hour when Christ will come again.

14. Are there any events that will precede the second coming of Christ?

Yes, the following events are expected to happen before the Second Coming:

- a. *The widespread conversion of the Jews to Christianity*, as prophesied by St. Paul: “For I would not have you ignorant, brethren, of this mystery ... that blindness in part has happened in Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles should come in. So all Israel should be saved...” (Rom 11:25-26).

- b. *There will be a great apostasy from the faith.* “As it came to pass in the days of Noah,” Christ said, “so shall it also be in the days of the Son of man. They ate and drank, they married wives and were given in marriage until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all... Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man shall be revealed” (Luke 17:26-27, 30). A little later Christ also said, “But yet the Son of man, when He comes, shall He find faith on earth, do you think?” (Luke 18:8)
- c. *The Antichrist, the “man of sin” or “the son of perdition” will appear and deceive many people by false miracles, and attempt to substitute himself in the place of Christ.* Thus, St. Paul says in his epistle: “And we beseech you, brethren, regarding the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and of our gathering together unto him: That you be not easily moved from your sense nor be terrified, neither by spirit nor by word nor by epistle, as sent from us, as if the day of the Lord were at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day will not come unless there comes a revolt first, and the **man of sin** be revealed, the **son of perdition** who opposes and is exalted above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he sits in the temple of God, showing himself as if he were God” (2 Thes 2:1-4). This rebellion is the final assault that the devil will attempt against the Church before the second coming of Christ. (CCC 675-676)

15. Will the Antichrist be one individual or several?

Based on Sacred Scripture, the Fathers and Doctors of the Church agree that the Antichrist will be one individual. However, there will be many forerunners of the Antichrist who, because they will likewise try to deceive the elect, are also called “antichrists.” It was in this sense that St. John writes: “Many seducers are gone out into the world who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a seducer and an antichrist.” (2 John 1:7).

ARTICLE 8: *“I believe in the Holy Spirit.”*

1. What does the eighth article of the Creed teach us?

The eighth article of the Creed teaches us that there is a Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, and that, like the Father and the Son, He is God eternal, infinite, omnipotent, Creator and Lord of all things.



Fig 1.8.1 The Holy Spirit as a Dove in the apse of St. Peter's Basilica

2. From whom does the Holy Spirit proceed?

The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, as from one Principle, by way of will and love.⁵ (CCC 246)

⁵ The Son proceeds from the Father by way of intelligence, because the Father in the Act of knowing Himself, begets His eternal Image, the Son. The Holy Spirit likewise proceeds from the Father and the Son, but by way of will and love, because the Holy Spirit proceeds as the Love between the Father and the Son.

3. If the Son proceeds from the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, it would seem as if the Father and the Son are prior to the Holy Spirit. How then can it be said that all the three Persons are eternal?

It is said that all the three Persons are eternal because the Father has begotten the Son from all eternity, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and from the Son from all eternity.

4. Why is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity specially designated by the name of the Holy Spirit?

The Third Person of the Blessed Trinity is specially designated by the name of the Holy Spirit because He proceeds from the Father and from the Son by way of spiration and of love. “Spiration” is an old English word for the act of breathing. (CCC 691)

5. What work is specially attributed to the Holy Spirit?

To the Holy Spirit is specially attributed works of love and goodness, particularly the Incarnation of the Son of God and the sanctification of souls.

6. Do the Father and the Son equally sanctify us with the Holy Spirit?

Yes, all the three Divine Persons equally sanctify us, just as all three Persons cooperated in forming the body and creating the soul of Jesus Christ. But, like the Incarnation of the Son of God, the sanctification of souls is specially attributed to the Holy Spirit because it is a work of love and goodness. (CCC 258, 689)

7. When did the Holy Spirit descend on the Apostles?

The Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, that is, fifty days after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and ten days after His Ascension. (CCC 731)

8. Where were the Apostles during the ten days preceding Pentecost?

The Apostles were gathered together in the “upper room” with the Virgin Mary and the other disciples, and were persevering in prayer (Acts 1:12-14). They were expecting the Holy Spirit, Whom Christ promised to send them (John 14:16, 26).



Fig 1.8.2 Descent of the Holy Spirit as Tongues of Fire

9. What effects did the Holy Spirit produce in the Apostles?

The Holy Spirit strengthened the faith of the Apostles, filled them with light, strength, charity, and an abundance of all His gifts.

10. Was the Holy Spirit sent for the Apostles alone?

No, the Holy Spirit was sent for the whole Church and for every faithful soul. (CCC 732)

11. What does the Holy Spirit do in the Church?

The Holy Spirit gives spiritual life to the whole Church, guides her in understanding the faith, and protects her from error.

12. How does the Holy Spirit give spiritual life to the Church?

The Holy Spirit gives spiritual life to the Church by giving various graces and gifts.

13. What graces does the Holy Spirit give to the Church?

The Holy Spirit gives two kinds of graces: *sanctifying grace* and *actual grace*.

Sanctifying grace is the divine life in our soul that makes us pleasing and holy before God. With sanctifying grace, we become adopted children of God, heirs of Heaven, and prince and princesses of His Kingdom. We receive sanctifying grace first by Baptism. We nourish this grace chiefly by receiving the sacraments, especially the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist, which we can receive regularly.

Actual grace is the help which the Holy Spirit gives us to do good and avoid evil. It enlightens our mind and strengthens our will to do good deeds and resist the temptation to sin. The temptation to sin comes from the devil. We receive actual grace by prayer and the performance of good works.

14. What other gifts does the Holy Spirit give to the Church?

The Holy Spirit gives seven special gifts. These gifts are Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety and the Fear of the Lord (See Isa 11:2). We receive them first at Baptism, but we receive an *increase* of these gifts from the Holy Spirit especially at the Sacrament of Confirmation. These gifts in turn produce what St. Paul collectively called “fruit of the Holy Spirit,” such as charity, joy, peace, patience, etc. (Gal 5:22-23).

15. What purpose do the gifts of the Holy Spirit serve?

The gifts of the Holy Spirit help us to develop good habits, called *virtues*, and eliminate bad ones, called *vices*.



Fig 1.8.3 The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

16. Explain the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are given in the book of Isaiah, the Prophet. Here Isaiah prophesied the spiritual gifts that Christ would have: “*And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of **wisdom**, and of **understanding**, the spirit of **counsel**, and of **fortitude**, the spirit of **knowledge**, and of **godliness**. And he shall be filled with the spirit of **the fear of the Lord**” (Isa 11:2-3). The gift of godliness is more popularly known as **piety**.*

Wisdom is a gift which enables us to make a right judgment about *divine things*, so that we see things according to God’s point of view, and not according to man’s point of view. For example, by this gift we judge that virtue is better than wealth, and charity is to be preferred than science.

Understanding is a gift which helps us to penetrate more fully the truths and mysteries of our faith, which we are unable to know by the natural light of reason alone.

Counsel is a gift which allows us to make a right judgment about our actions, and to be directed by the Holy Spirit toward things that redound to God's glory, to our salvation, and to that of our neighbor.

Fortitude is a gift which inspires us with confidence to do what is good, to face dangers and to endure what is difficult, thus enabling us to overcome all obstacles, dangers and difficulties.

Knowledge is a gift enabling us to make a right judgment about *created and human things* at their proper worth, and to learn how to use them rightly and to direct them to our last end, which is God. For example, by the gift of knowledge we judge that the care of the soul is better than the care of the body. The gift of knowledge is related to the gift of wisdom because they both enable us to make a right judgment. However, the gift of knowledge refers to right judgment about created and human things, while the gift of wisdom is right judgment about divine things.

Piety (or godliness) is a gift that allows us to be moved by the Holy Spirit toward the love and worship of God, and to preserve a benevolent mind toward our neighbor for the love of God.

The **Fear of the Lord** is a gift that allows us to control our desires, and to hate anything that could separate us from God.

ARTICLE 9: *“The Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints.”*

THE CHURCH IN GENERAL

1. What does the ninth article of the Creed teach us?

The ninth article of the Creed teaches us that Jesus Christ founded a visible society on earth called the Catholic Church, and that all those who belong to this Church are in communion with (or form a community with) one another. The church community includes, not only members who are on earth, but also those who are in purgatory, and those who are in Heaven.

2. Why immediately after the article that treats of the Holy Spirit is mention made of the Catholic Church?

Immediately after the article that treats of the Holy Spirit mention is made of the Catholic Church to indicate that the Church’s holiness comes from the Holy Spirit, who is the Author of all holiness. (CCC 749)



Fig 1.9.1 St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome (near the Tiber river)

3. What does the word “church” mean?

The word “church” means an *assembly* of believers. It does not refer to the building where the people pray, but to the church-goers who gather together to pray in the building. The church-goers form an assembly of believers called the church. WE who gather together ARE the church, not the building. (CCC 751)

4. Why is the Church called the Mystical Body of Christ?

The Church is called the **Mystical Body of Christ** because its members are united by supernatural bonds with one another and with Christ, their Head. The metaphor came from St. Paul who said, “He is the head of the body, the Church” (Col 1:18).

5. Where are the members of the Catholic Church to be found?

The members of the Catholic Church are found partly in Heaven, forming the **Church Triumphant**; partly in purgatory, forming the **Church Suffering**; and partly on earth, forming the **Church Militant**. The Church on earth is called “militant” because it is still engaged in combat with the temptations and evil forces of the devil. (CCC 954)

6. Do these various parts of the Church constitute only one Church?

Yes, these various parts of the Church constitute only one Church and only one Mystical Body because they have the same Head, Jesus Christ, the same Spirit animating and uniting them, and the same goal, which is eternal happiness.

7. What other metaphor has been used for the Church besides being the “Body” of Christ?

The Church has often been referred to also as the “Bride” or “Spouse” of Christ. This metaphor also came from St. Paul who compared the union of husband and wife to that of Christ and His Church (Eph 5:22-33). (CCC 796)

THE CHURCH IN PARTICULAR

8. What is the Catholic Church?

The Catholic Church is the union or congregation of all the baptized who, still living on earth, profess the same faith and the same Law of Jesus Christ, participate in the same sacraments, and obey their lawful pastors, particularly the Roman Pontiff.

9. What is necessary to be a member of the Church?

To be a member of the Church it is necessary to be baptized, to believe and profess the teachings of Jesus Christ, to participate in the same sacraments, and to acknowledge the pope and the other lawful pastors of the Church.

10. Who are the lawful pastors of the Church?

The lawful pastors of the Church are the Roman Pontiff, that is, the pope, who is the Supreme Pastor, and the bishops. Other priests, also, and especially the parish priests, have a share in the pastoral office, subject to the bishop and the pope.

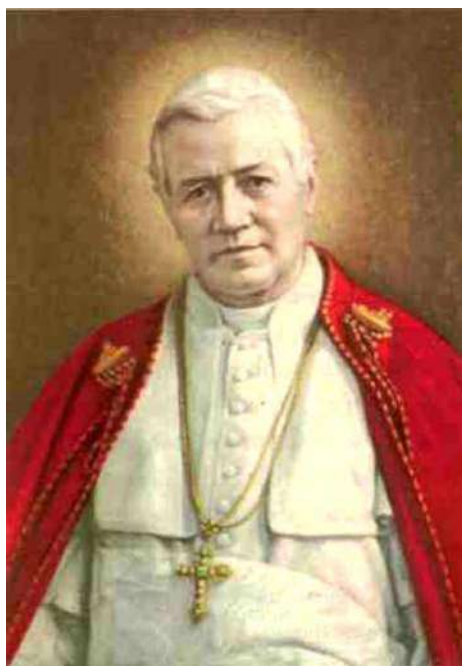


Fig 1.9.2 Pope St. Pius X

The Pope who approved First Communion for Children
Patron Saint of First Communicants

11. Why do you say that the pope is the Supreme Pastor of the Church?

Because Jesus Christ assigned this office to St. Peter, the first pope, by these words: “I say to you: that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church,... and I will give to you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven... Whatever you shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in Heaven, and whatever you shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in Heaven” (Matt 16:18-19). Later Christ also said to him: “Feed My lambs, feed My sheep” (John 21:15, 17). Therefore, anyone who succeeds St. Peter keeps his office as Supreme Pastor of the Church.

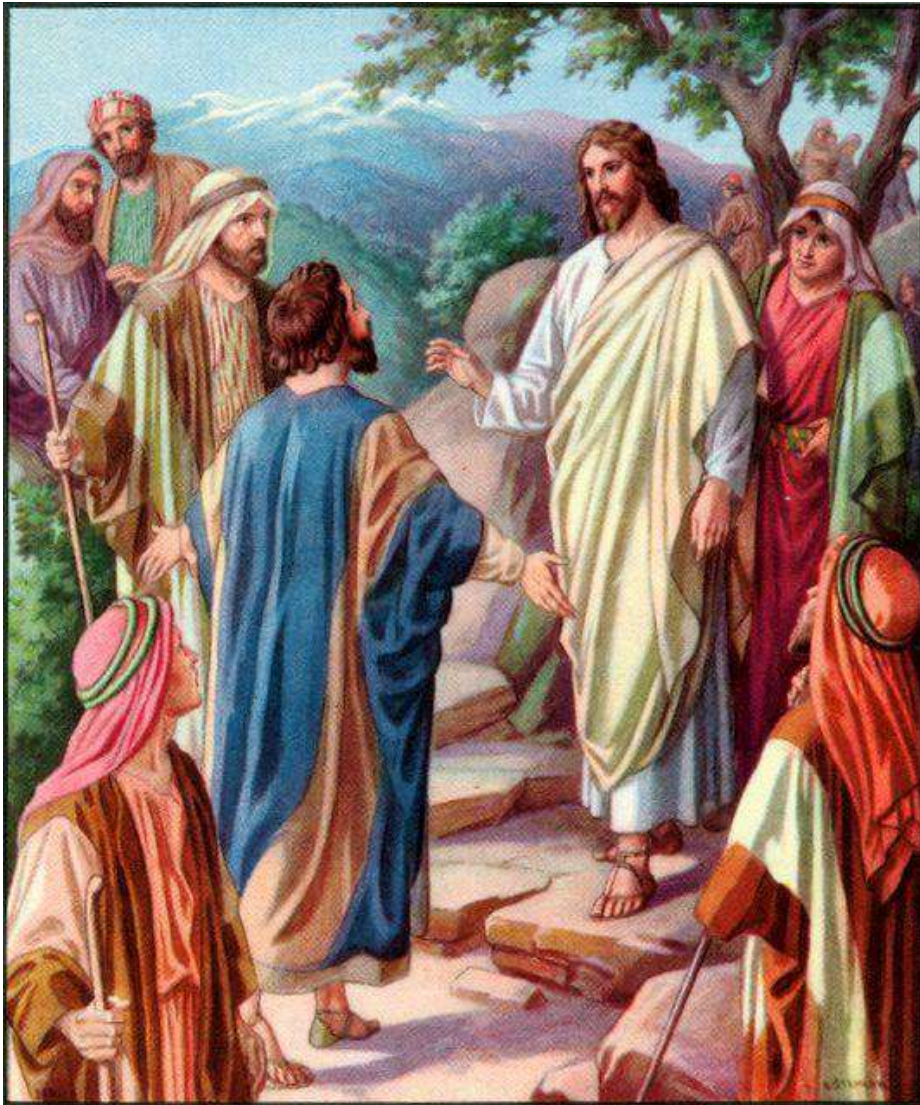


Fig 1.9.3 Christ Made St. Peter Head of the Church

12. Do the many societies of persons who are baptized but who do not acknowledge the pope as their Head belong to the Catholic Church?

No, those who do not acknowledge the pope as their Head do not belong to the Catholic Church.

13. How can you tell that the Catholic Church is the true church founded by Jesus Christ?

The true church founded by Christ is distinguished from other societies that claim to be true by four marks: she is **One, Holy, Catholic** and **Apostolic**. By these four marks you can tell that the Catholic Church **is** the true church founded by Christ. (CCC 811)

14. Why is the Catholic Church one?

The Catholic Church is one, because her children of all ages and places are united together in the same faith, in the same worship, in the same law, and in participation of the same sacraments, under the same visible Head. There cannot be more than one church. For, as there is but one God, one faith and one Baptism, the true church can only be one. Among all Christian churches, the Catholic Church alone is clearly one. She has one faith, one pope, one denomination anywhere in the world. (CCC 813)

15. Why is the Catholic Church holy?

The Catholic Church is holy because her Founder, Jesus Christ, is holy; her saints are holy; her faith, her laws and her sacraments are holy, which the Catholic Church also is. (CCC 823)

16. Why is the Catholic Church catholic?

The word “catholic” means *universal*. The Catholic Church is catholic because she embraces the faithful of all nations, of all times, of all places, and of all ages and conditions. The Catholic Church satisfies this character of universality. It is the same for all people of all ages anywhere in the world. (CCC 830 - 831)

17. Why is the Catholic Church Apostolic?

The Catholic Church is Apostolic because: (a) She is founded on, and has a history that goes back without a break to the time of, the Apostles; (b) She believes and teaches all that the Apostles believed and taught; and (c) She is guided and governed by their lawful successors. Only the Catholic Church is Apostolic. Other sects date back only to the sixteenth century or later, but the Catholic Church dates back to the first century of Christianity, that is, the time of Christ and the Apostles. (CCC 857)



Fig 1.9.4 Icon of Christ and the 12 Apostles

18. To be saved, is it enough to be any sort of member of the Catholic Church?

No, to be saved it is not enough to be any sort of member of the Catholic Church. It is necessary to be a *living* member.

19. Who are the living members of the Church?

The living members of the Church are the just, and the just alone, that is, those who are actually in the state of grace.

20. And who are the dead members?

The dead members of the Church are the faithful in mortal sin. These members may be physically alive, but are spiritually dead.

21. Can one be saved outside the Catholic Church?

No, no one can be saved outside the Catholic Church, just as no one could be saved from the flood outside the Ark of Noah, which was a figure of the Church. This means that those who know the Church to be founded by Christ, but choose not to join it, will not be saved. However, those people who, *through no fault of their own*, are ignorant of Christ or the Church, but who seek God with sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do God's will, are indeed separated from the body of the Church, but are united to the soul of the Church and, therefore, may be saved. (CCC 846, 847)

22. How were the Patriarchs, the Prophets, and other just men who lived before the coming of Christ saved?

The good people who lived before the coming of Christ were saved by the faith they had in Christ to come, by means of which they spiritually belonged to the Church.

23. Suppose that a man is a member of the Catholic Church, but does not put her teachings into practice, will he be saved?

He who is a member of the Catholic Church, but does not put her teachings into practice nor persevere in charity, is a dead member,

and hence will not be saved. It is not enough to be a member of the Catholic Church. One must also be a *living* member by persevering in charity and doing good works. (CCC 837)

24. Are we then obliged to believe all the truths that the Church teaches us, and to do all that the Church commands?

Yes, we are obliged to believe all the truths that the Church teaches, and to do all that the Church commands, because Jesus Christ said to the Apostles: “He who hears you, hears Me, and he who despises you, despises Me” (Luke 10:16).

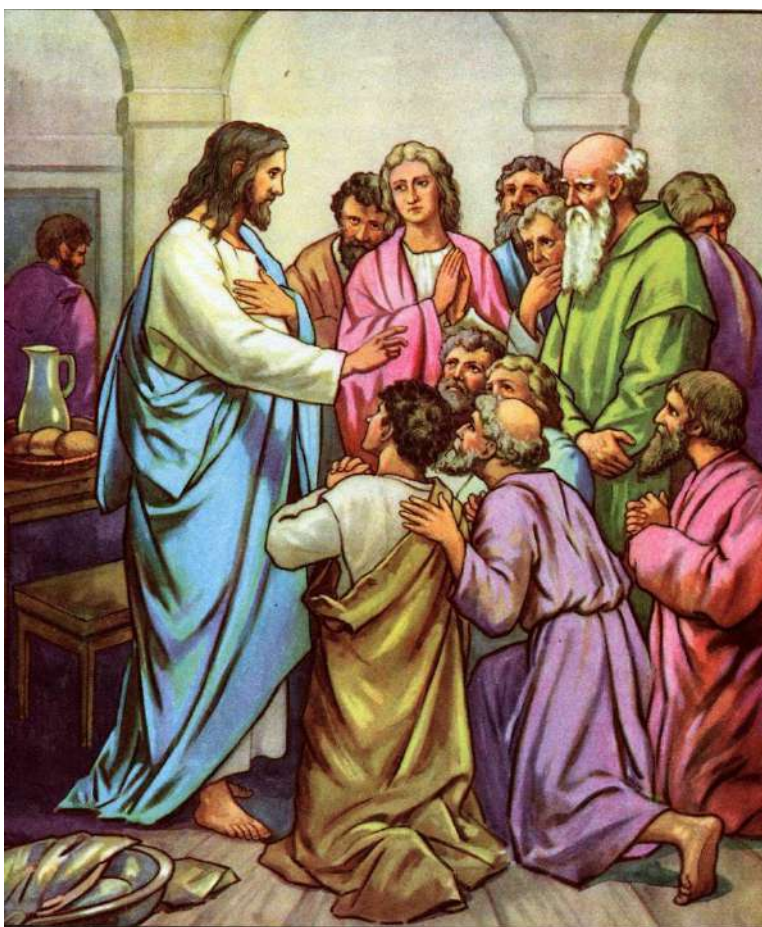


Fig 1.9.5 Christ Promised to Send the Holy Spirit

“I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete,⁶ that he may abide with you forever ... The Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatever I shall have said to you” (John 14:16, 26)

⁶ The “Paraclete” is another word for advocate or counselor. The Holy Spirit is our Paraclete, the One whom Christ sends to counsel and guide us.

25. Can the Church err in what she proposes for our belief?

No, the Church cannot err in what she proposes for our belief, because according to the promise of Jesus Christ she is unfailingly assisted in her teachings and protected from error by the Holy Spirit.

26. Is the Catholic Church infallible, then?

Yes, the Catholic Church is infallible, and so, those who reject her teachings lose the faith and become heretics.

27. Can the Catholic Church be destroyed or perish?

No, the Catholic Church may be persecuted, but she can neither be destroyed nor perish. Many kingdoms, civilizations and societies have already come and gone, but the Catholic Church still stands since the time she was founded. She will last till the end of the world because Jesus Christ promised that He would be with her till the end of time (Matt 28:20).

28. Why is the Catholic Church so persecuted?

The Catholic Church is so persecuted because, like her Founder Jesus Christ, who was also persecuted, she disapproves sin and vice, combats error and immorality, and condemns all acts of injustice and oppression.

29. Does a Catholic have any other duties toward the Church?

Every Catholic ought to have a boundless love for the Church, ought to consider himself infinitely honored and happy in belonging to her, and ought to work for her glory by every means in his or her power.

THE MAGISTERIUM

30. Is there any distinction between the various members of the Catholic Church?

There is a very notable distinction between the members of the Catholic Church. For there are some who rule and some who obey; some who teach and some who are taught. (CCC 873)

31. What do you call that part of the Church which teaches?

That part of the Church which teaches is called the *Magisterium*.

32. What do you call that part of the Church which is taught?

That part of the Church which is taught is called the Learning Church, the Church Taught, or simply the faithful.

33. Who set up this distinction in the Church?

Jesus Christ Himself established this distinction in the Church.

34. Are the *Magisterium* and the Learning Church two Churches?

The *Magisterium* and the Learning Church are two distinct parts of one and the same Church, just as in the human body the head is distinct from the rest of the body, and yet forms but one body with them.

35. Of whom is the *Magisterium* composed?

The *Magisterium* is composed of all the bishops, with the pope as their head, be they dispersed throughout the world or assembled together in a Council. (CCC 880)

36. And the Learning Church, of whom is it composed?

The Learning Church, or the Church Taught, is composed of all the faithful – both lay and religious.

37. Who, then, are they who possess the Teaching Authority in the Church?

The Teaching Authority in the Church is possessed by the *Magisterium*, that means, by the pope and the bishops, and, dependent on them, by the other sacred ministers (priests and deacons). The pope, the bishops, the priests and the deacons, arranged in the order of their successive ranks, comprise the organizational structure, known as the *hierarchy*, in the Church.

38. Are we obliged to listen to the *Magisterium*?

Yes, without doubt we are obliged under pain of eternal damnation to listen to the *Magisterium*. For Jesus Christ said to the pastors of His Church, in the persons of the Apostles: “He who hears you, hears Me, and he who despises you, despises Me” (Luke 10:16).

39. Besides her teaching office does the Church have any other authority?

Yes, besides her **teaching office** the Church has authority to administer the sacraments and sacred things, which is called her **sanctifying office**; and the authority to make laws and to exact the observance of them, and this is called her **governing office**. (CCC 893, 894 – 896)

40. Does the authority possessed by the members of the hierarchy come from the people?

The authority possessed by the hierarchy does not come from the people, and it would be heresy to say it did. It comes solely from God.

41. To whom does the exercise of this authority belong?

The exercise of this authority belongs solely to the pope and to the bishops subordinate to him. However, the bishops have no authority unless they are in communion with the pope. (CCC 883)

THE POPE AND THE BISHOPS

42. What is a pope?

The pope, who is also called the sovereign pontiff, or the Roman pontiff, is the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, and the visible Head of the Catholic Church. The first pope was St. Peter himself.



Fig 1.9.6 St. Peter, the first Pope of the Catholic Church

43. Why is the pope called the Vicar of Jesus Christ?

The pope is called the Vicar or Representative of Jesus Christ on earth because he represents Christ on earth and acts in His place in governing or teaching the Church.

44. Why is the pope the Visible Head of the Church?

The pope is the Visible Head of the Church because he visibly governs her with the authority of Jesus Christ Himself, who is her invisible Head. (CCC 936)

45. Can the pope err when teaching the Church?

The pope cannot err, that is, he is *infallible* when teaching about faith and morals because of the promise of Jesus Christ that He would be with us till the end of time, and because of the unfailing assistance and protection of the Holy Spirit.

46. When is the pope infallible?

The pope is infallible when, as pastor and teacher of all Christians and in virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority, he defines and proclaims a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be believed by the entire Church. He is not infallible when he only gives his opinion about science, politics, etc., but he is infallible when he, in his office as Supreme Teacher, makes a solemn pronouncement *on matters of faith or morals* to be believed by the entire Church. He is also infallible in the *ordinary exercise* of his teaching office when he teaches or reiterates a doctrine that the Church has consistently taught through the ages. (CCC 891- 892)

47. What sin would a man commit who refuses to accept the solemn definitions of the pope?

He who refuses to accept the solemn definitions of the pope, or who even doubts them, sins against faith. And if he remains obstinate in his unbelief, he would no longer be a Catholic, but a heretic.

48. Why has God granted to the pope the gift of infallibility?

God has granted the pope the gift of infallibility in order that we all may be sure and certain of the truths which the Church teaches.

49. Does the gift of infallibility mean that the pope cannot sin?

No, the gift of infallibility prevents the pope from making false teachings, but it does not prevent him from sinning. Infallibility is not the same as impeccability, which is immunity from sin.

50. How should every Catholic act toward the pope?

Every Catholic must acknowledge the pope as Father, Pastor, and Universal Teacher, and be united with him in mind and heart in his solemn pronouncements, and even in his ordinary teaching practice when he repeats what the Church has consistently taught through the ages.

51. After the pope, who are they who by divine appointment are to be most venerated in the Church?

After the pope, those who by divine appointment are to be most venerated in the Church are the bishops. They are the pastors of the faithful, whom the Holy Spirit placed to rule the Church in the diocese entrusted to them, in dependence on the pope.

52. What is a bishop in his own diocese?

A bishop in his own diocese is the Teacher who teaches, the Steward of the sacraments and graces, and the Father who governs the faithful belonging to his diocese. (CCC 888, 893, 894)

53. Why is the bishop called the lawful Pastor?

The bishop is called the lawful Pastor because the jurisdiction, or the power which he has to govern the faithful of his diocese, is conferred upon him according to the laws and regulations of the Church.

54. Whom do the pope and the bishops succeed?

The pope is the successor of St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles; while the bishops are the successors of the Apostles in all that pertains to the ordinary government of the Church.

55. Who assists the bishop in the care of souls?

The bishop is assisted in the care of souls by priests, and especially by parish priests. With due dependence on his bishop the parish priest presides over and directs a portion of the diocese, known as a *parish*.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

56. What do the words “the communion of saints” in the ninth article of the Creed teach us?

In the words “the communion of saints,” the ninth article of the Creed teaches us that the Church’s spiritual goods, both internal and external, are common to all her members because of the intimate union that exists between them. The words do not mean the receiving of Holy Communion by the saints. Rather they signify the fact that the various members of the Church, – including those on earth, those in purgatory and those in Heaven, – form a communion or community, which share in the graces and spiritual goods of the Church, and which they all hold in common. (CCC 947)

57. Which are the internal goods that are commonly shared in the Church?

The internal goods that are commonly shared in the Church are: the graces received through the sacraments; the virtues of faith, hope and charity; the infinite merits of Jesus Christ; the superabundant merits of the Blessed Virgin and of the saints; and the fruit of all the good works done in the Church. (CCC 950)

58. Which are the external goods that are commonly shared in the Church?

The external goods that are commonly shared in the Church are the sacraments, the Sacrifice of the Mass, public prayers, religious functions, and all the other outward practices that unite the faithful.

59. Do all the children of the Church participate in this communion or sharing of goods?

All Catholics who are in the state of grace participate in the sharing of internal goods, while those who are in mortal sin do not perfectly participate in these goods.



Fig 1.9.7 The Communion of Saints

The upper half shows the saints in Heaven (the **Church Triumphant**); in the middle are the faithful on earth hearing Mass (the **Church Militant**); and the group below are the faithful departed still in purgatory (the **Church Suffering**).

60. Why can't those who are in mortal sin perfectly participate in the sharing of these spiritual goods?

Because that which unites the faithful with God and with Jesus Christ as His living members, rendering them capable of performing meritorious works for eternal life, is the grace of God which is the supernatural life of the soul. Since those who are in mortal sin are without the grace of God, they are excluded from perfectly sharing in the spiritual goods, nor can they accomplish works meritorious toward eternal life.

61. Do Christians then, who are in mortal sin derive no advantage from the internal and spiritual goods of the Church?

Christians who are in mortal sin still continue to derive some advantage from the internal and spiritual goods of the Church, inasmuch as they still preserve their Christian character which is indelible, and the virtue of faith which is the basis of justification. They are aided, too, by the prayers and good works of the faithful toward obtaining the grace of conversion to God.

62. Can those in mortal sin participate in the external goods of the Church?

Those in mortal sin can participate in the external goods of the Church, unless indeed they are cut off from the Church by excommunication.

63. Why are the members of this communion (or community) called saints?

The members of this communion or community are called "saints" because all on earth are called to sanctity and have been sanctified by Baptism; while those in Heaven have already attained perfect sanctity, and those in purgatory are undergoing purification and will eventually attain perfect sanctity.

64. So, does the communion of saints extend to Heaven and purgatory?

Yes, the communion of saints extends to Heaven and purgatory, because charity unites the Church Triumphant, the Church Suffering and the Church Militant. The saints pray to God both for us and for the souls in purgatory; in turn the poor souls in purgatory praise and thank the saints and the people on earth who pray for them. We on our part give honor and glory to the saints, at the same time that we relieve the suffering souls in purgatory by our prayers and good works. The word “suffrage” is used to refer to the prayers and good works that we offer on behalf of the souls in purgatory. (CCC 962, 1475)

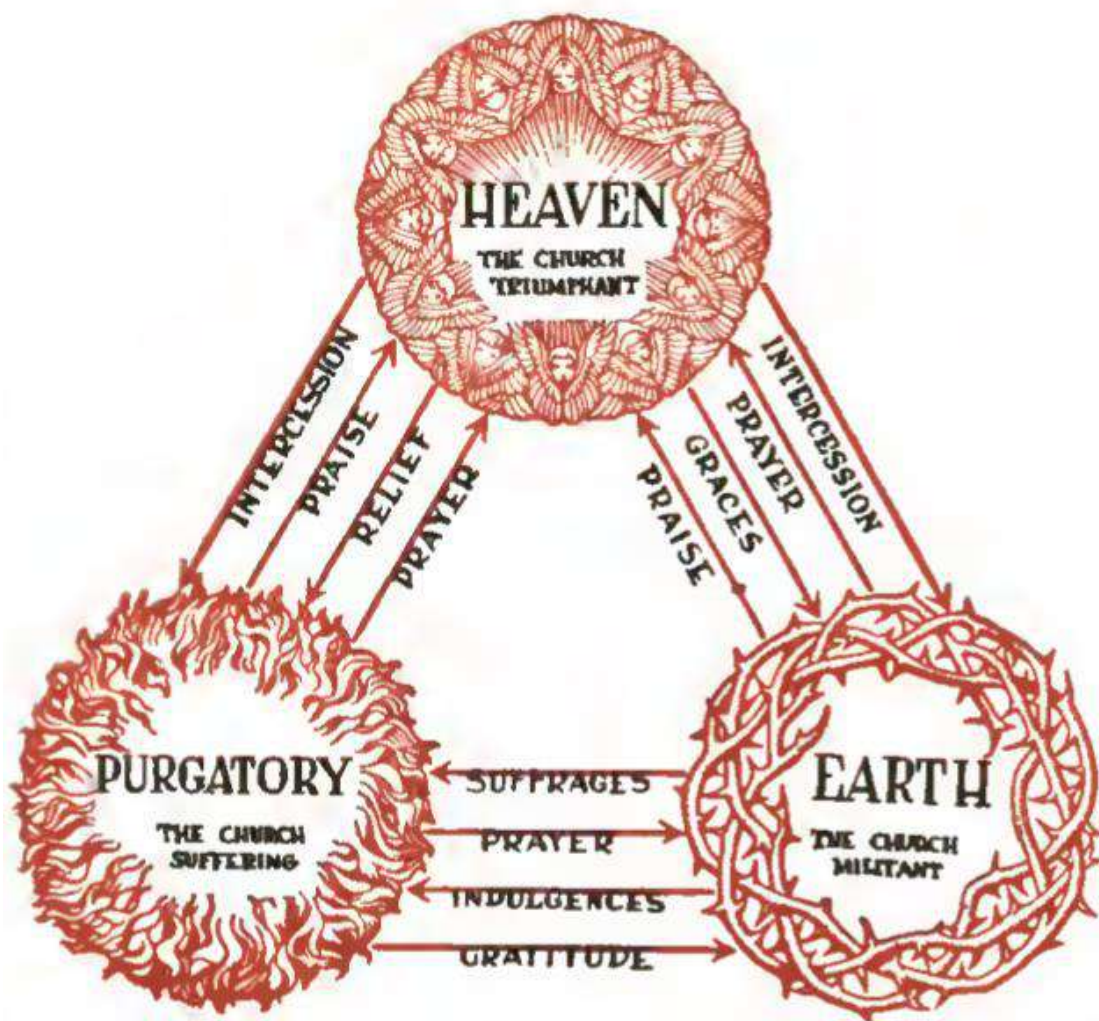


Fig 1.9.8 Diagram of the Communion of Saints

THOSE OUTSIDE THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

65. Who are they who do not belong to the communion of saints?

Those who are in hell do not belong to the communion of saints in the other life. In this life those who are in mortal sin, and those who are outside the Catholic Church, do not belong to the communion of saints. Note that one does not lose membership in the Catholic Church by mortal sin. However, those in mortal sin are spiritually dead members and cannot perfectly participate in the communion of saints.

66. Who are they who are outside the true Church?

Outside the true Church are the infidels, the Jews, the heretics, the apostates, the schismatics, and the excommunicated.

67. Who are the infidels?

The infidels are those who have not been baptized and do not believe in Jesus Christ as God, because they either believe in a different god or gods, or, though admitting one true God, they do not believe in Jesus Christ as the true God; for instance, the Muslims, the Hindus, the Buddhists, etc.

68. Who are the Jews?

The Jews are those who profess the Law of Moses; have not received Baptism; and do not believe in Jesus Christ as the promised Savior of the World.

69. Who are the heretics?

Heretics are those who had been baptized, but who refuse to believe one or more truths revealed by God and taught as an article of faith by the Catholic Church; for example, the Arians, the Nestorians, and the various Protestant sects.

70. Who are the apostates?

Apostates are those who abjure, or by some external act, deny the Catholic faith which they previously professed.

71. Who are the schismatics?

Schismatics are those Christians who, while not explicitly denying any dogma, yet voluntarily separate themselves from the Catholic Church, that is, from their lawful pastors.

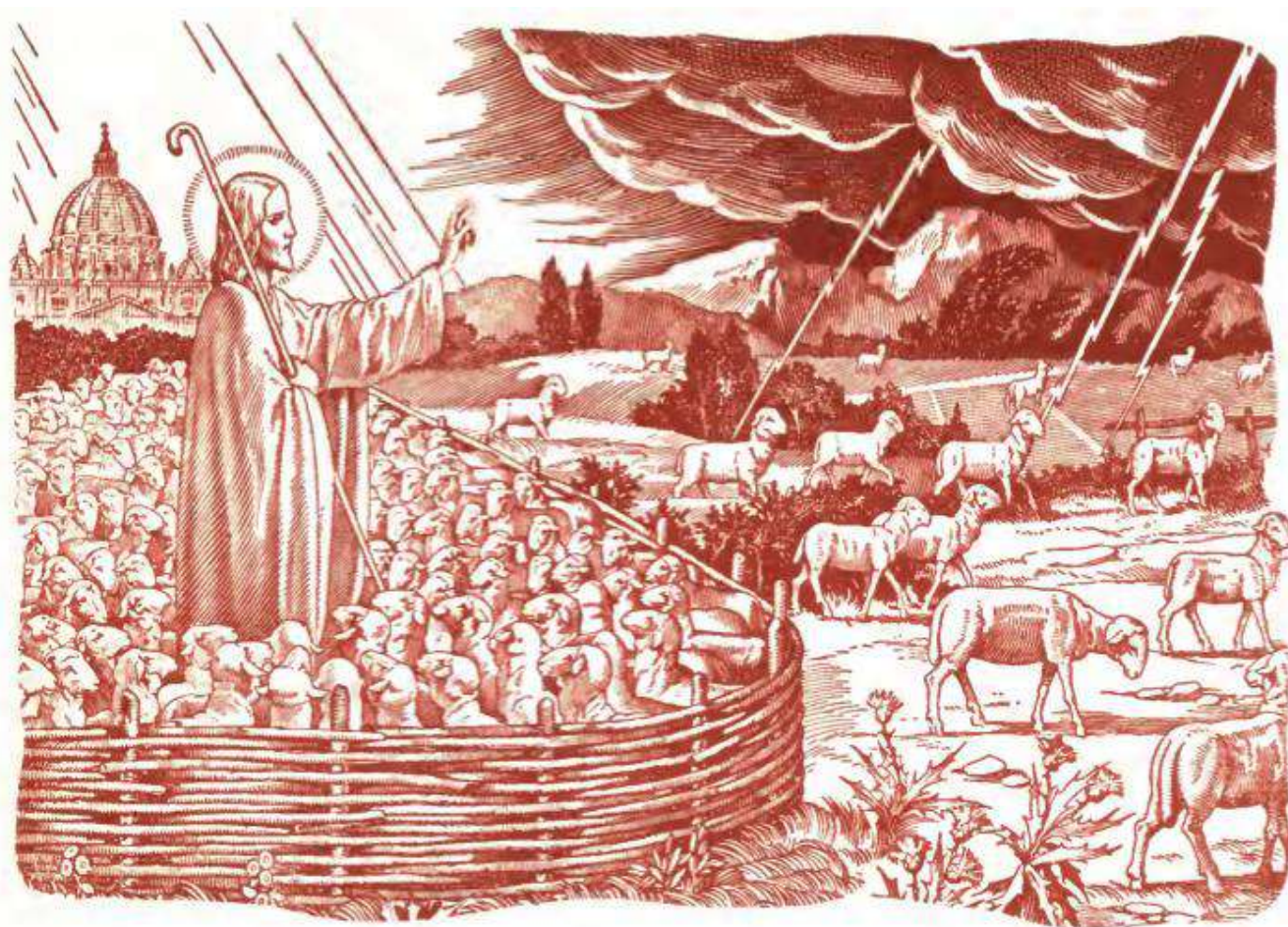


Fig 1.9.9 Sheep outside the Fold

Those who are outside the Catholic Church are like sheep outside the fold. This is unfortunate. Christ wished all the faithful to be members of the one, holy, catholic and Apostolic Church, so “that there shall be one fold and one shepherd” (John 10:16). Note that those in mortal sin are still in the fold, but they are like dead sheep within the fold, and cannot share the joy of the living.

72. Who are the excommunicated?

The excommunicated are those who, because of grievous transgressions, are punished by being cut off from membership in the Catholic Church by the pope or by their bishop, who, however, hopes for and desires their return back to the Church.

73. Should excommunication be dreaded?

Excommunication should be greatly dreaded, because it is the severest and most terrible punishment the Church can inflict upon her rebellious and obstinate children.

74. Of what goods are the excommunicated deprived?

The excommunicated are deprived of public prayers, of the sacraments, of indulgences, and of Christian burial.

75. Can we in any way help the excommunicated?

We can in some way help the excommunicated and all others who are outside the true Church, by salutary advice, by prayers and good works, and by begging God in His mercy to grant them the grace of being converted to the faith and of entering into the communion of saints.

76. What should our attitude be toward those who are outside the Catholic Church?

We ought to treat them with kindness and respect, since people do not lose their human dignity just because they have different religious beliefs. If possible we should also work for the unity of all believers, that the dream of our Lord may be fulfilled, that “there shall be one fold and one shepherd” (John 10:16). This idea of promoting unity among all believers is known as *ecumenism*. (CCC 820)

77. Are there false and true approaches to ecumenism?

Yes. The true approach to ecumenism, or toward the unity of all believers, is by helping people of other faiths see and accept the bases and truths of our Catholic faith, and to reject incompatible and false beliefs. True ecumenism cannot be achieved simply by closing our eyes to the differences or incompatibilities in the faiths of different religions. To think that one can achieve unity simply by placing idols of other religions inside Catholic Churches, or by praying together with people of other faiths without having a common God to pray to, or by bending and watering down the doctrines and liturgy of the Church and being silent when the doctrines and traditional practices of the Church are unfairly criticized, is to pursue the path of freemasonry, syncretism and *false ecumenism*.

True ecumenism requires familiarity with, or knowledge of the beliefs of other religions. But true ecumenism is not attained simply by an ineffectual dialogue that consists merely in an exchange of beliefs with people of other faiths but remaining silent about their erroneous doctrines. The way to true ecumenism is by a combination of **charity** and **sound scholarship**. It is by the practice of *holiness*, clear *expounding* of the doctrines of the faith, and adequate *refutation* of incompatible teachings, that the eyes of the ignorant are opened and the hearts of the lukewarm are inflamed. In past centuries the truth and moral beauty of the Catholic Church shone brilliantly in the holiness and learning displayed by her doctors and saints. The idea that the Church today should only be embracing non-Catholics but not refuting erroneous or false beliefs is false ecumenism. Vatican II's call for true ecumenism is a call for prayerful charity and scholarship, sanctity and deep learning, not a call for mediocrity and indifference, silence and timidity in the face of new and ancient errors. (CCC 820-822)

ARTICLE 10: “The forgiveness of sins.”

1. What does the tenth article of the Creed teach us?

The tenth article of the Creed teaches us that Jesus Christ has left to His Church the power of forgiving sins.

2. Can the Catholic Church forgive every sort of sin?

Yes, the Catholic Church can forgive all sins, no matter how many or how grave they may be, because Jesus Christ has given her full power to bind and to loose. (CCC 982)



Fig 1.10.1 The Prodigal Son Begged Forgiveness from his Father

3. Who exercises this power of forgiving sins in the Church?

Those who exercise the power of forgiving sins in the Church are, first of all, the pope, who alone possesses this power in all its fullness; then the bishops, and, dependent upon the bishops, the priests. (CCC 986)

4. How does the Church forgive sins?

The Church forgives sins through the merits of Jesus Christ by conferring the sacraments instituted by Him for this purpose, especially the Sacraments of Baptism and Reconciliation.

5. Are all punishments due to sin forgiven when the Church forgives sins?

No, the forgiveness of sin removes the *guilt* of sin, but not all the temporal punishments due to sin. Usually some temporal punishments remain to be satisfied even after the guilt from all the sins have been forgiven in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This is why most people have to spend time in *purgatory* even when they die without an unforgiven mortal sin in their soul. However, some or all of these punishments can be removed even on earth by receiving *indulgences* from the Church. (Indulgences will be explained in the next section.)

6. What is purgatory?

Purgatory is the place where souls who have died in the state of grace suffer the temporal punishments due to their sins. Souls in purgatory will eventually go to Heaven, but they must first satisfy the temporal punishments due for their sins. Also, purgatory is the place where souls undergo a process of purgation or purification. This is because sin does not only cause guilt. It also deforms the soul by giving it evil dispositions, inclinations and unhealthy attachment to creatures. All these deformities must be removed in purgatory before the soul can enter Heaven, because the Bible says of Heaven: “There shall not enter into it anything defiled” (Rev 21:27). (CCC 1472)

INDULGENCES

7. What is an indulgence?

An indulgence is the remission of the temporal punishment due for sins that have already been pardoned as far as their guilt is concerned. This remission is accorded by the Catholic Church outside the Sacrament of Reconciliation. (CCC 1471)

8. From whom has the Church received the power to grant indulgences?

The Church received the power to grant indulgences, by virtue of her power to bind and to loose, from our Lord Jesus Christ. (CCC 1478)

9. In what way does the Church by means of indulgences remit this temporal punishment?

The Church by means of indulgences remits this temporal punishment by applying to us the superabundant merits of Jesus Christ, of the Blessed Virgin and of the saints, which constitute what is known as the “Treasury of the Church.” (CCC 1476-1477)

10. Who has the power to grant indulgences?

The pope alone has the power to grant indulgences in the whole Church, and the bishop in his own diocese, according to the faculty given him by the pope.

11. How many kinds of indulgences are there?

Indulgences are of two kinds: plenary and partial.

A **plenary** indulgence is the remission of all the temporal punishment due to sins.

A **partial** indulgence is the remission of only a part of the temporal punishment due to sins.



Fig 1.10.2 An Angel Frees a Soul in Purgatory

Notes:

1. The picture above shows a soul being freed by an angel from purgatory. The poor souls are depicted as suffering in a pit of fire, but the “fire” in purgatory is an expiatory and cleansing fire, not a punitive fire like the hell-fire in the hell of the damned. But artists have no better way of showing this on canvas than to use the same image for an essentially different kind of fire.
2. The place called “purgatory” actually refers to a state or condition that a soul in a state of purification is in. Since disembodied souls do not occupy space, “purgatory” is technically not a material place. But we are humans and we tend to think of spiritual realities in terms of their analogy with bodily realities; so we speak of “purgatory” as if it were a place.

12. Why does the Church grant indulgences?

In granting indulgences, the Church intends to aid our incapacity to expiate all the temporal punishment in this world, by enabling us to obtain by means of works of piety and Christian charity that which in past ages Christians gained by the rigor of Church-imposed penances.

13. What value should we set on indulgences?

We should set the greatest value on indulgences because by them we satisfy the justice of God and obtain possession of Heaven sooner and more easily.

14. What are the conditions necessary to gain a plenary indulgence?

The conditions necessary to gain a plenary indulgence are the following (Norm 20.1, *Enchiridion of Indulgences*, 1999):

1. Sacramental confession and Holy Communion;
2. The completion of all prescribed works;
3. Prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father; and
4. Freedom from all attachment to sin.

15. Can indulgences be applied also to the souls in purgatory?

Yes, indulgences can be applied to the souls in purgatory, when the Vatican Apostolic Penitentiary says that they may be so applied. The souls in purgatory are no longer able to gain an indulgence for themselves, which is why they need our help. Unlike the poor souls in purgatory, we on earth can gain indulgences for ourselves, but we can also ask God to apply the indulgences we earn to the souls in purgatory. This is known as *suffrage*.

ARTICLE 11: “*The resurrection of the body.*”

1. What does the eleventh article of the Creed teach us?

The eleventh article of the Creed teaches us that *all* men will rise again, every soul resuming the body it had in this life. (CCC 998)

2. How will the resurrection of the dead be accomplished?

The resurrection of the dead will be accomplished by the power of Almighty God and the ministry of the angels: “For the Lord himself shall come down from Heaven with commandment and with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God; and the dead who are in Christ shall rise first” (1 Thes 4:15).

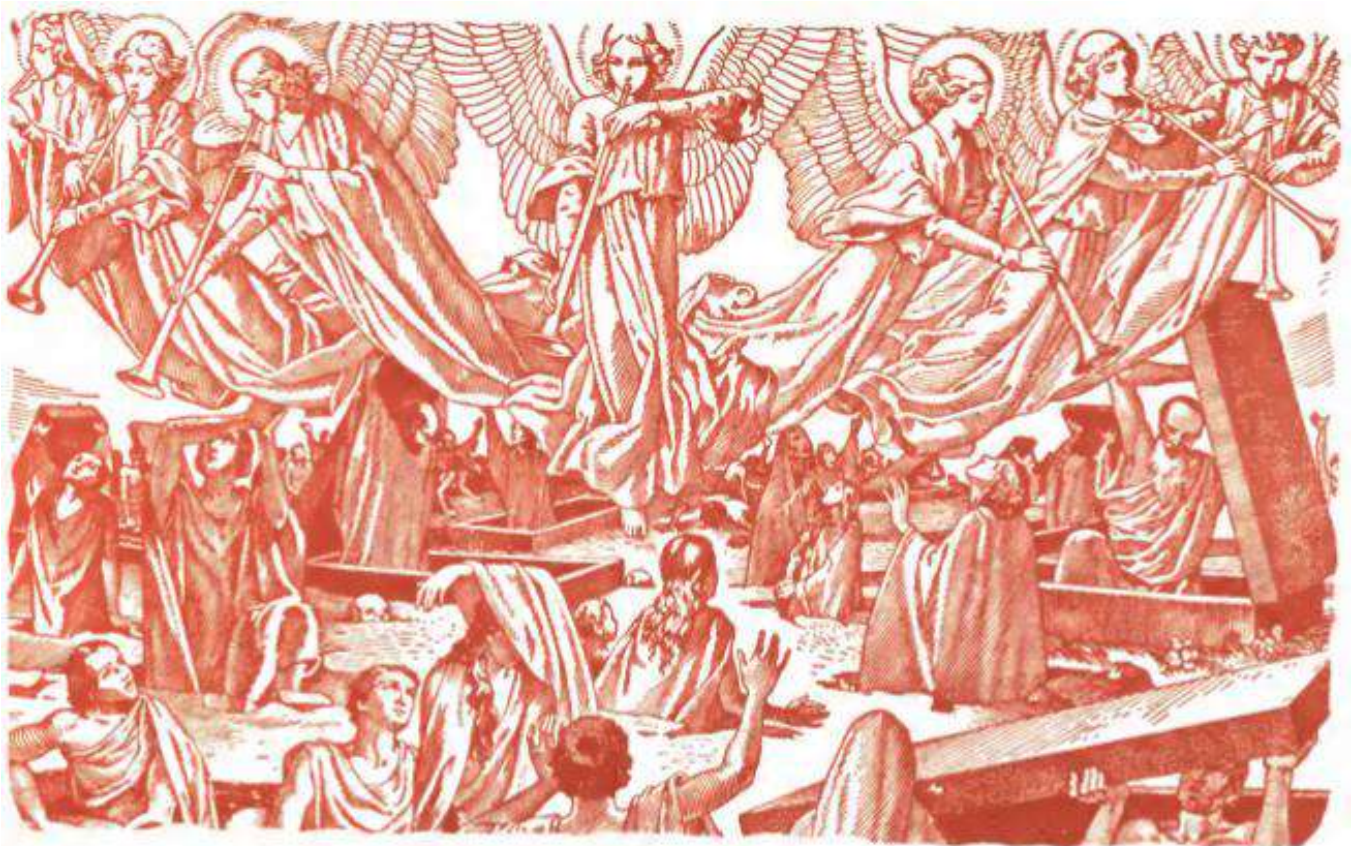


Fig 1.11.1 The Resurrection of the Body

3. What about those who were cremated, will they also rise again?

It does not really matter whether the dead was cremated or buried. Everyone will rise again. Each person will rise with his selfsame body, not another person's body: "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth. And I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God. Whom I myself shall see, and my eyes shall behold, and not another: this my hope is laid up in my bosom" (Job 19:25-27).

4. If you had a deformity when you were born or when you died, will you rise up with a deformed body?

Since St. Paul said that the dead shall rise *incorruptible* (1 Cor 15:52), we believe that in the resurrection of the dead the bodies (even of sinners) will generally be restored to their natural condition, that means, without defects or deformities. (CCC 997)

5. How long will it take for the dead to rise?

The resurrection of the dead will happen very quickly: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye..." (1 Cor 15:52)

6. When will the resurrection of the dead take place?

The resurrection of the dead will take place at the end of the world, during the second coming of Christ. Then this will be followed by the general judgment. (CCC 1001, 1038)

7. Why does God will the resurrection of the body?

God wills the resurrection of the body for three reasons: (a) in order that the soul, having done good or evil while united with the body, may be rewarded or punished along with it; (b) because we are not destined to exist as disembodied souls, since a human being by nature is a *composite* of body and soul; and (c) as God has given greater dignity to the human body by taking it (as part of the human nature that He assumed), so greater dignity is given to the body when the soul reunites with it.

8. Will all rise in the same way?

No, there will be a vast difference between the bodies of the blessed and the bodies of the damned. For only the bodies of the blessed shall have, like the risen Christ, the features and endowments of glorified bodies.

9. What are the features and endowments that are to characterize the bodies of the blessed?

The bodies of the blessed will be like a “spiritual body,” similar to Christ’s glorified body (CCC 999).

They shall have the following features, endowments or gifts:

1. **Impassability**, by which they can never again be subject to evil, nor to any kind of pain, nor to need of food, of rest or the like (1 Cor 15:53);
2. **Brightness** or **Clarity**, by which they shall shine as the sun and as so many stars (1 Cor 15: 41-42);
3. **Agility**, by which they shall be able to pass in a moment and without fatigue from one place to another, and from earth to Heaven (1 Cor 15:43-44); and
4. **Subtlety**, by which without hindrance they shall be able to penetrate or pass through any body, as did Jesus Christ who after the resurrection passed through closed doors (John 20:19)

10. And what about the bodies of the damned?

The bodies of the damned will be destitute of all the endowments of the glorified bodies of the blessed, and will bear upon them the appalling mark of eternal reprobation. Their bodies will be incorruptible, and their senses intact, but only so as to suffer the everlasting torment of hell.

ARTICLE 12: *“And life everlasting. Amen.”*

1. What does the last or twelfth article of the Creed teach us?

The last article of the Creed teaches us that, after the present life there is another life, eternally happy for the blessed in Heaven, or eternally miserable for the damned in hell.

2. Can we comprehend the bliss of Heaven?

No, we cannot comprehend the bliss of Heaven, because it is beyond the scope of our limited minds, and because the goods of Heaven cannot be compared with the goods of this world.



Fig 1.12.1 If the earth is so beautiful, just imagine what Heaven must be like.

Saint Paul says: “Eye has not seen nor ear heard, neither has it entered the heart of man, what things God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Cor. 2:9).

3. In what does the happiness of the blessed consist?

The happiness of the blessed consists in forever seeing God “face to face,” and in loving and possessing Him. (CCC 1023)

4. In what does the misery of the damned consist?

The misery of the damned consists in being forever deprived of the vision of God and punished with eternal torments in hell.

5. How do we know that a good and merciful God will punish wicked souls with an everlasting punishment?

We know that the pains of hell are everlasting because it was Jesus Christ Himself Who said so: “Then He shall also say to those who shall be at His left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into **everlasting fire**, which was prepared for the devil and his angels' ... These shall go into **everlasting punishment**, but the just shall go into everlasting life” (Matt 25:41, 46). Although God is good and merciful, He is also just. Therefore, those who think that there is no hell, or that there is no everlasting punishment, are deluding themselves. Hell is just as real as Heaven is. (CCC 1035)

6. Are the happiness of Heaven and the miseries of hell for the soul alone?

At present the happiness of Heaven and the miseries of hell are for the soul alone, because at present only the souls of those who have died are in Heaven or in hell. But after the resurrection of the body when the souls are again united to the body, man in the fullness of his nature, that is, body and soul, will be forever happy in Heaven or forever tormented in hell.

7. Shall the bliss of Heaven and the miseries of hell be the same for all men?

The bliss of Heaven in the case of the blessed, and the miseries of hell in the case of the damned, will be the same in substance and in everlasting duration; but in measure or degree, they will be greater or less according to the extent of each one's merits or demerits in their earthly life.

8. Do souls which die in mortal sin go straight to hell?

Yes, souls that are in the state of mortal sin are cast right away into hell. (CCC 1033-1034)

9. Do souls with no unforgiven mortal sin go straight to Heaven?

Most souls, even though they have no unforgiven mortal sins, will need to pass through purgatory to suffer the temporal punishments due to sin, and to undergo a process of purification by which all evil inclinations and worldly attachments of the soul are removed, before they go to Heaven. (CCC 1030-1031)

10. What does the word “Amen” signify at the end of the Apostles’ Creed?

The word “Amen” at the end of a prayer signifies “so be it.” But at the end of the Apostles’ Creed it signifies and confirms what was said in the beginning of the Creed: “I believe...” Therefore, the Amen of the Apostles’ Creed means, “So it is my faith, and all things contained in these twelve articles are what I hold and firmly believe to be true.” (CCC 1064)

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Fig 1 Madonna and Child

Artist: Giovanni Battista Salvi da Sassoferrato (1609-1685)

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sassoferrato_-_Jungfrun_i_b%C3%B6n.jpg

Fig 1.0.1 The Holy Scripture

Free photo by mmi9 from Pixabay.com

<https://pixabay.com/photos/bible-book-christian-holy-reading-1108074/>

Fig 1.0.2 St. Ignatius of Antioch

Artist: Possibly Cesare Fracanzano (1605-1651) of the Neapolitan School of Painting

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ignatius_of_Antiochie.jpg

Fig 1.0.3 Madonna and Child in a Catacomb Art

Artist: Unknown

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Fig 1.0.4 The Twelve Apostles

Product of Demetz Art Studio Italian Statuary

<https://www.churchsupplies.com/store/twelve-apostles-statues-500-1-12.shtml>

Fig 1.1.1 Metamorphosis of a Butterfly

Science Classroom poster on Amazon.com.

<https://www.amazon.com/Educational-Science-Butterfly-Poster-Chart/dp/B06XYJBK9M>

Fig 1.1.2 The Blessed Trinity

An illustration from Bishop Louis LaRavoire Morrow's *My Catholic Faith*, 1963, p. 30

Fig 1.1.3 God the Father

Artist: Eustache Le Sueur (1616-1655)

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eustache_Le_Sueur_-_The_Creation_of_the_World.jpg

Fig 1.1.4 Angels Singing Praises to God

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Fig 1.1.5 St. Michael the Archangel

Artist: Guido Reni (1575-1642)

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Fig 1.1.6 St. Raphael with Bishop Domonte

Artist: Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617-1682)

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Saint_Raphael.JPG

Fig 1.1.7 Guardian Angel Protecting a Child from the Demon

Artist: Filippo Tarchiani (1576-1645)

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:L%27angelo_custode.jpg

Fig 1.1.8 Adam and Eve in Paradise

From Adolf Hult, Bible Primer, Old Testament, Published by the Augustana Synod, 1919, p. 10

Fig 1.1.9 The Immaculate Conception

Artist: Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo (1727-1804)

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<https://www.flickr.com/photos/thomashawk/49817517242/in/album-72157709381600857/>

Fig 1.2.1 The Annunciation

By Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617-1682)

<https://www.rawpixel.com/image/262058/free-illustration-image-angel-annunciation-antique>

Fig 1.2.2 Christ Healing the Sick

Artists: O.A. Stemler and Bess Bruce Cleaveland

An illustration from Lillie A. Faris, *Standard Bible Story Readers*, Book One, 1925, p. 76.

Fig 1.3.1 Mary adoring the Baby Jesus

Artists: O.A. Stemler and Bess Bruce Cleaveland

An illustration from Lillie A. Faris, *Standard Bible Story Readers*, Book One, 1925, p. 36.

Fig 1.3.2 The Assumption of Mary

Artist: Guido Reni (1575-1642)

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Assumption_of_Virgin_Mary_by_Guido_Reni_\(1638-9\)_-_Alte_Pinakothek_-_Munich_-_Germany_2017.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Assumption_of_Virgin_Mary_by_Guido_Reni_(1638-9)_-_Alte_Pinakothek_-_Munich_-_Germany_2017.jpg)

Fig 1.3.3 The Coronation of Mary

Artist: Hans von Aachen (1552-1615)

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hans_von_Aachen_Marienkrönung.jpg

Fig 1.4.1 Instruments of Christ's Passion

Pendant 3 3/16" x 2 1/2," circa 17th century, containing the emblems of the passion
From the Metropolitan Museum of Art

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/197103>

Fig 1.4.2 Christ Crucified between Two Thieves

A watercolor painting by James Jacques Tissot (1836-1902)

Brooklyn Museum

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brooklyn_Museum_-_The_Death_of_Jesus_\(La_mort_de_Jésus\)_-_James_Tissot.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brooklyn_Museum_-_The_Death_of_Jesus_(La_mort_de_Jésus)_-_James_Tissot.jpg)

Fig 1.4.3 The Burial of Jesus Christ

A painting by Giovanni Battista della Rovere (1560-1627)

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Fig 1.5.1 Christ's Descent into the Hell of the Just

An illustration in a Portuguese catechism of 1910

<http://www.sendarium.com/p/catecismo-ilustrado-de-1910.html>, #8

Fig 1.5.2 The Resurrection

A painting by Carl Heinrich Bloch (1834-1890)

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Fig 1.6.1 The Ascension of our Lord

Artists: O.A. Stemler and Bess Bruce Cleaveland

An illustration from Lillie A. Faris, *Standard Bible Story Readers*, Book Two, 1925, p. 143

Fig 1.6.2 Christ Seated at the Right Hand of the Father

An illustration in a Portuguese catechism of 1910

<http://www.sendarium.com/p/catecismo-ilustrado-de-1910.html>, #11

Fig 1.7.1 The Last Judgment

An illustration in a Portuguese catechism of 1910

<http://www.sendarium.com/p/catecismo-ilustrado-de-1910.html>, #12

Fig 1.8.1 The Holy Spirit as a Dove in the apse of St. Peter's Basilica

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Fig 1.8.2 Descent of the Holy Spirit as Tongues of Fire

Artist: Matthys Voet (circa 1600 +)

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Matthys_Voet_-_Mysteries_of_the_Rosary,_Pentecost.jpeg

Fig 1.8.3 The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

<https://www.catholicfaithstore.com/daily-bread/blog/page/11/>

Note: There is a Pinterest button near the image, indicating that the image may be shared for non-commercial use.

Fig 1.9.1 St. Peter's Basilica in Rome (near the Tiber river)

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Saint_Peter%27s_Basilica,_Sant%27Angelo_bridge,_by_night,_Rome,_Italy.jpg

Fig 1.9.2 Pope St. Pius X

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Fig 1.9.3 Christ Made St. Peter Head of the Church

Artists: O.A. Stemler and Bess Bruce Cleaveland

An illustration from Lillie A. Faris, *Standard Bible Story Readers*, Book Five, 1928, p. 109

Fig 1.9.4 Christ and the 12 Apostles

Artist Unknown

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Fig 1.9.5 Christ Promised to Send the Holy Spirit

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<https://ia803006.us.archive.org/7/items/OldBiblePicturesSmaller/42EE1202-4F9A-4615-94F7-29CDE29759D0.jpeg>

Fig 1.9.6 St. Peter, the first Pope of the Catholic Church

Artist: Paolo Emilio Besenzi (1608-1656)

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:St_Peter_Besenzi.jpg

Fig 1.9.7 The Communion of Saints

An illustration in a Portuguese catechism of 1910

<http://www.sendarium.com/p/catecismo-ilustrado-de-1910.html>, #15

Fig 1.9.8 Diagram of the Communion of Saints

An illustration from Bishop Louis LaRavoire Morrow's *My Catholic Faith*, 1963, p. 159

Fig 1.9.9 Sheep outside the Fold

An illustration from Bishop Louis LaRavoire Morrow's *My Catholic Faith*, 1963, p. 134

Fig 1.10.1 The Prodigal Son Begged Forgiveness from his Father

Artist: Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617-1682)

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Return_of_the_Prodigal_Son_1667-1670_Murillo.jpg

Fig 1.10.2 An Angel Frees a Soul in Purgatory

Artist: Ludovico Carracci (1555-1619)

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Carracci-Purgatory.jpg>

Fig 1.11.1 The Resurrection of the Body

An illustration from Bishop Louis LaRavoire Morrow's *My Catholic Faith*, 1963, p. 170

Fig 1.12.1 If the earth is so beautiful, just imagine what Heaven must be like

Canadian Rockies in the Morning

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